

السنة الأولى

Friday, October 19, 1996
Page 15

Saturday October 19 1996

Abu Dhabi D.8.50
 Albania L.250
 Andorra FF.10
 Austria S.35
 Bahamas B.D.85
 Belgium B.100
 Bulgaria L.250
 Canada C.1.35
 Czechia K.112.50
 Cyprus C.1.00
 Denmark D.100
 Finland F.100
 France F.100
 Germany D.M.3.50
 Greece G.4.00
 Hong Kong H.K.S.25
 Hungary F.250
 India R.15
 Israel N.S.2.90
 Italy L.1.00
 Jordan J.D.1.25
 Korea S.150
 Kuwait K.D.1.50
 Latvia L.250
 Lithuania L.250
 Luxembourg L.F.55
 Malaysia M.4.00
 Mexico M.4.00
 Netherlands G.4.00
 Norway N.15
 Oman O.R.1.00
 Pakistan P.100
 Portugal P.100
 Romania R.100
 Saudi Arabia S.2.00
 Singapore S.2.00
 Slovakia S.K.55
 Slovenia S.L.T.250
 Spain P.250
 Sweden S.K.17
 Switzerland S.F.2.00
 Thailand B.50
 Turkey T.L.100
 Ukraine U.S.2.00
 USA U.S. \$ 75

The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46,688

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

The new editor of the Independent on Sunday

John Vidal on toxins in food

Sport

Days of wine and Rosie

Interview, The Week page 15



So what's your poison?

The Week page 17

Paul Gascoigne: 'I'm a disgrace'

The Week page 24



Bishops issue 'left-leaning' election briefing

Catholic church 'backs Blair'

Madeline Bunting
Religious Affairs Editor

An unprecedented pre-election briefing to be published by the Roman Catholic Church on Monday and distributed to every parish in England and Wales will cause controversy because of its perceived bias towards Tony Blair's Labour Party.

More than 1.5 million practising Catholics in England and Wales will be urged to put the principles of Catholic social teaching and biblical tradition — justice for the poor and the fundamental dignity and value of every individual — before personal interest as they approach the ballot box next year.



Cardinal Hume: increasing worries over social justice

Catholic teaching — which are not likely to be election issues — are mentioned but do not feature prominently. Senior church sources accept that the document is bound to provoke controversy, but have gone out of their way to stress that it does not amount to an endorsement of any political party.

range of issues, including asylum for refugees, homelessness and education, and is believed to be sympathetic to Mr Blair's emphasis on community.

Monsignor Kieran Conry, head of the Catholic Media Office, admitted the briefing "might be interpreted as left-leaning", but rejected claims of fashionableness. "Catholic social teaching is not an optional extra. It is integral to being a Catholic and is rooted deeply in the Old Testament when God said, 'I don't want sacrifices, I want justice for the poor.'"



Dolores O'Riordan: said to have lost weight as a result of stress during US leg of tour

Singer's illness wrecks £6m tour

Clare Longrigg

DOLORES O'Riordan, Dublin lead singer of Irish band The Cranberries, has pulled out of a European tour amid rumours that she is suffering from anorexia.

The band cancelled the European leg of its world tour, due to start this week, because Ms O'Riordan is too weak to perform. She is said to have stopped eating and her weight has dropped dramatically.

The Cranberries' world tour hit the rocks when the band was forced to cut short its US tour in August. Ms O'Riordan, who has been dogged with colds and flu, became too exhausted to continue.

The band was planning to take a break for a year when the European tour was over, but Ms O'Riordan's health wouldn't stand up to a punishing 37-date tour. More than 300,000 tickets had been sold for the tour, which was to have earned the Cranberries an estimated £6 million.

"She hasn't been well for a while," said the band's publicist, Lindsey Holmes, yesterday. "She had a skiing accident a few years ago and her leg is still a bit funny. The tour is taking its toll. She has lost weight. I haven't seen a doctor's report. It could be stress; it could be anorexia."

The 24-year-old from Limerick was once too shy to sing facing the audience. She is now a multi-millionaire and according to a survey this year earned an estimated £4.5 million in the previous 12 months.

Ms O'Riordan was yesterday described by one interviewer as "angular, bony, and unhealthy looking".

Trouble with U2, The Week, page 18

Go-ahead for sect school

John Carvel on proposals to offer state funding to Seventh Day Adventist Church

THE first state school managed by a religious sect is expected to be approved by Education Secretary Gillian Shephard after the schools quango recommended public funding for a secondary run by the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

The Funding Agency for Schools said yesterday it had approved plans for the John Loughborough school in Harlow, north London, to opt into the grant-maintained state system. The school would receive annual revenue of about £500,000 to teach 250 pupils, plus a £150,000 capital grant to upgrade science and technology facilities.

within the next five months, opening the door to a spate of opt-in by religious schools run by Muslims, Sikhs and other groups so far excluded from the state system.

The Seventh Day Adventist Church, founded in the US in the mid-19th century, has about 19,000 members in Britain. Its adherents await the second coming of Jesus Christ, reject the theory of evolution and abstain from intoxicants.

white pupils, but the 150 on its current roll are all black or Asian. Parents pay up to £750 a term, but the church subsidises poorer families.

A funding agency spokesman said it was satisfied the school was educationally and financially viable, although there will be a further check by inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education next month. The project was approved under rules to increase parental choice.

The agency did not make a judgment about the suitability of religious groups as long as the national curriculum could be delivered. It would be up to Mrs Shephard to decide religious questions.

Jacky Tonge, Harrogate's director of education, said the agency would be vulnerable to criticism from a wide turn to page 2, column 6

Drugs price war looms after controls are lifted

Sarah Whitebloom

A PRICE war in the £1.3 billion a year over-the-counter medicines market was imminent last night after a Government agency declared that an agreement which fixes the prices of branded drugs, such as Disprin and Anadin, should go.

Despite fears that thousands of local pharmacies could close, the Office of Fair Trading said it planned legal action to end fixed prices on branded, non-prescription medicines including painkillers, antiseptics and vitamins.

Drug costs

Price differences for selected products	20% public	ASDA	Overnight	Supermarket
Paracetamol 24 pack	£1.75	24p	65p	
Seven Seas cod liver oil 60	£3.50	£1.70	£2.95	
Streptocid 24	£1.79	£2.95	£1.45	
Nurofen 12	£1.39	£2.95	99p	

the 2,293 products covered by the deal account for just 5 per cent of pharmacists' profits. But Mr Bridgeman did not dismiss the possibility that some could close. He said ending the agreement would enable pharmacists to be "a lot more entrepreneurial".

Asda, whose outgoing chief executive, Archie Norman — now the Tory candidate for Tunbridge Wells — has led the attack on the agreement, was jubilant about the OFT's decision. The firm said it had no plans to start cutting prices, but would be very interested if someone else took action.

Safeway said it would not let its customers be disadvantaged if others cut prices. Sainsbury said it would not change its prices until the law was altered.

Tesco welcomed the OFT's decision, and Superdrug said it saw it as the first step towards deregulating pharmacy controls.

Not all welcomed the decision, however. Boots said the agreement was in the public interest, although it would consider its position if others cut prices. A spokesman said: "It is hard to see who will benefit — it won't be the people who started the ball rolling."

OFT figures indicate that

Inside News

... at the ...
... will ...
... up to ...
... but ...
... will ...

World News

... San ...
... power ...
... 1999 ...
... whether ...
... want ...
... as ...

Finance

... scientific ...
... evidence ...
... direct ...
... link ...
... cancer ...
... delivered ...
... new ...
... blow ...
... to the ...
... tobacco ...

Sport

... Paul Gascoigne ...
... admitted ...
... bringing ...
... disgrace ...
... upon ...
... himself ...
... but ...
... pledged ...
... to 'come ...
... back ...
... stronger ...
... and do ...
... my ...
... best ...
... for ...

Comment and Letters, 6; Obituaries, 7; Weather, 2

The Week
Crossword, 24;
Sport, 20-24.



"a romantic delirium for troubled times"
Karl Miller, *The Observer*

le Carré

THE TAILOR OF PANAMA

"le Carré shows what an extraordinarily witty writer he can be...spectacularly funny"
Margot Barnes, *The Sunday Times*

"a book about legends and lies, about great loves and little betrayals, about the myth of truth and the consequences of deception. As such it is a work of rare brilliance"
Peter Miller, *The Times*

"an excoriating denunciation of hypocritical diplomacy, opportunistic high politics and exploitative journalism which explodes in an apocalyptic climax"
Gerald Kaufman, *Sunday Telegraph*

OUT NOW
Hodder & Stoughton

Yeltsin's sacked general brings Russian theatre audience to their feet in spontaneous applause

Lebed stays centre-stage

David Hearst in Moscow

ALEXANDER Lebed, the man supposedly dumped in the political cold by President Boris Yeltsin on Thursday, entered the warm glow of Moscow's elegant Mali theatre last night to be welcomed by a rapturous audience rising to its feet and applauding.

The general and Mrs Lebed elected to litmus-test the first night of their new lives with a high-profile outing to see Ivan the Terrible: A Tragedy in Five Acts, by Tolstoy - a drama about Old Russia's most infamous Tsar.

He was going to the performance, he said. In one quick deadpan soundbite earlier - "to study how to govern the state".

The small meticulously restored 19th century theatre was abuzz. By the time the grey-suited Gen Lebed appeared in the stalls, the audience burst out in spontaneous applause. By the time the entire column of grey-suited, culture-seeking bodyguards had also got into their second row seats, the audience was on its feet.

The matronly attendant on the ground floor cloakroom could not contain herself: "You remember when the they showed every day shooting in Chechnia. Everyone was speaking about stopping the war. Well, he did stop the war. Now he's in disgrace".

Sacked as national security chief by the president, Gen Lebed is seen as a likely challenger for the Yeltsin throne.

The lights went down. The curtain went up on the Kremlin in the 16th century. Ivan the Terrible, like his successor Boris the Terrible, was



General Lebed and his wife basking in the adulation of the crowd at a Moscow theatre yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BRAUCHLI

sick. He ruled Russia for 50 years. Plague-ridden, poverty-stricken Russia was being attacked from south, east and west.

Ivan was conscience-stricken. He had killed too many people. And there was that regrettable incident when he did it in his elder son. He pros- trated himself centre stage

and looked at the spot coming from the gods. "I was not a Tsar, I was a wolf, a man who killed others. I have killed my own son. I have sinned more than Cain..." Much wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Enter the delegation from the nobles' parliament in Tsarist times, who immediately threw themselves at

Ivan's feet. That much has changed in the Kremlin; members of the present leadership generally stay upright in President Yeltsin's presence.

Ivan offered to stand down, but the delegation urged him to stay, for the sake of Russia. "Don't leave us," they cried. The effect on Ivan's hobbling

body was quicker than a triple bypass operation. He threw away his staff, crowned himself, and just to get back into the swing of things, cut a head off.

Gen Lebed sat riveted. This was the stuff, Direct action. Then, entered Godonov. When to be a Good Tsar. But (and here Gen Lebed was

'I've come to the theatre to study how to govern the state'

Gen Lebed on Ivan the Terrible

(almost taking notes) it took him another 14 years and one probable murder to do it. After all that, Russia was plunged into another period of plague, economic catastrophe and war.

Lebed loses Chechnia, page 6; David Hearst, page 8

BSE will stay a burning issue until 2002

Lisa Bucklegham and Simon Beavis

THE Government is to award five-year contracts to power companies to burn cattle culled as part of the BSE crisis, in what will be the first official acknowledgment that the "mad cow" problem will last beyond the turn of the century.

As part of an increasingly desperate search for solutions to the disposal of culled cattle, the Government is understood to have offered to hand environmental protection rules to allow power stations to burn pulverised carcasses.

Following weeks of trials on experimental test rigs, the Department of Trade and Industry will soon award a five-year deal to National Power, PowerGen or ScottishPower to carry out the disposal. It is unclear which company is likely to win the work.

The disclosure follows an earlier revelation that the Government is examining expensive and unorthodox ways to dispose of cattle older than 30 months culled in the scheme, such as in refrig-

erators and containers. The measures are being urgently studied even though foreign governments such as Austria have offered incinerator capacity to relieve the 400,000-strong backlog of cattle designated for culling.

Ministers have considered using Britain's fairly scarce incinerator capacity to solve the crisis, but believe this would be highly costly. The power station plan would at least provide electricity from the crisis.

Whitehall sources say the generating companies have raised concerns about the project and have asked to be indemnified against any claims that might arise from public health worries, or for damage to their stations.

Although power stations burn fuel at very high temperatures, it remains unclear whether all traces of BSE would be destroyed. The companies will probably also seek assurances that there is no threat to the health and safety of their staff.

Other technical details also need to be resolved first. Under current legislation, the power generators would need

continued from page 1

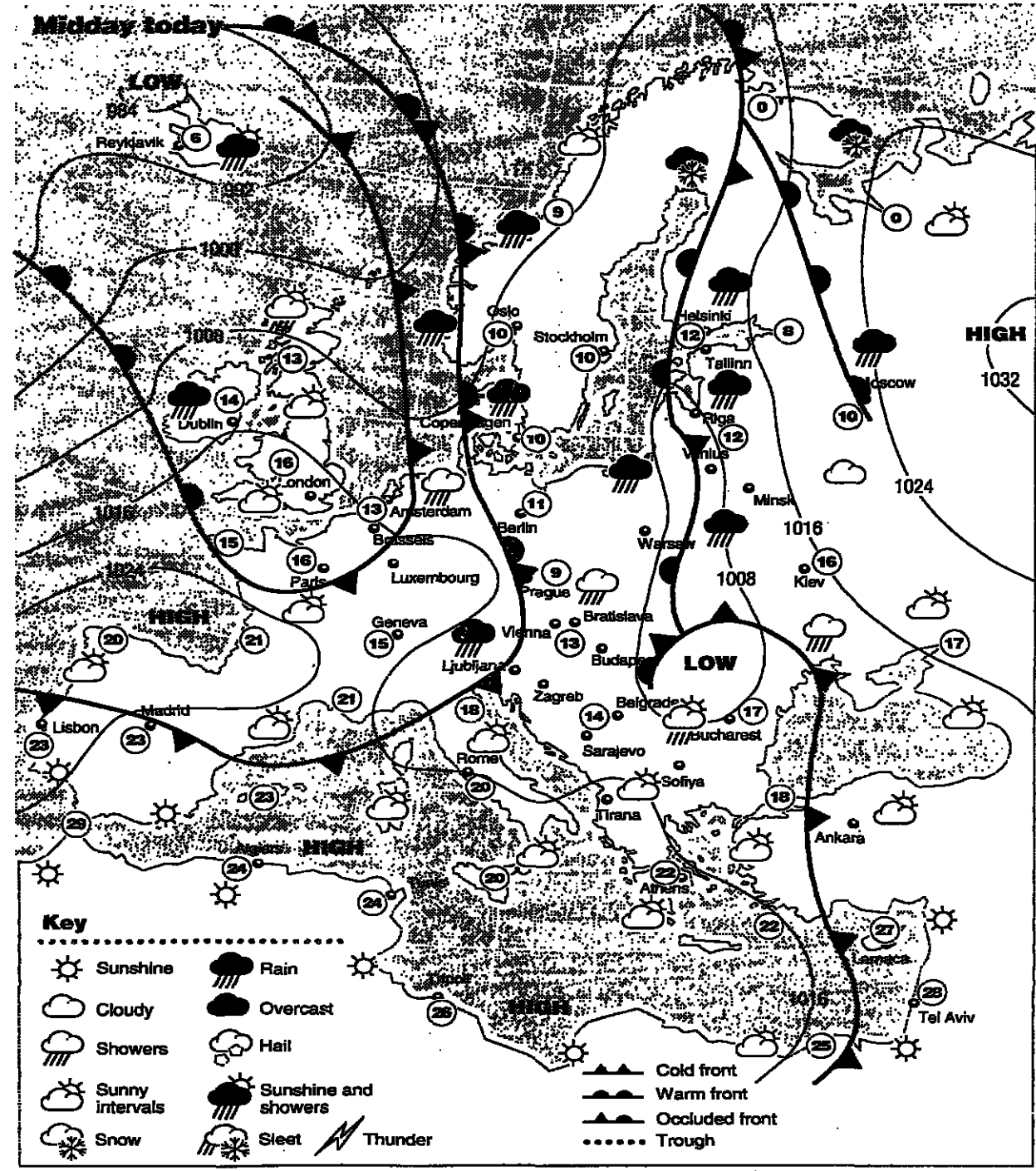
range of religious groups if it turned down similar requests for opting in from small schools. "In my formal objection to Mrs Shephard, I will say this is a waste of public money in a borough with huge needs for spending on schools," she said.

But Sir Robert Balchin, chairman of the Grant Main- tained Schools Foundation, said the school was doing an excellent job. "All the evidence suggests these are sen-

sible, hard-working people with the kind of family values that all parents require in a school."

Local consultations are nearing completion for the Al Furqan school, a Muslim primary in Birmingham, to submit plans to the funding agency. Four proposals for Muslim schools are being developed in the London borough of the Grant Main- tained Schools Foundation. Gurd Gur Nanak school in Hillingdon wants grant-maintained status for a school for 11-16 year old Sikhs.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities

City	Today	Tomorrow
Algeria	24 13 S	25 14 S
Amsterdam	15 8 R	16 9 R
Athens	20 12 S	21 13 S
Berlin	13 8 R	14 9 R
Bombay	27 19 R	28 20 R
Buenos Aires	10 7 F	11 8 F
Calcutta	28 18 R	29 19 R
Cairo	24 13 S	25 14 S
Cardiff	12 7 R	13 8 R
Chicago	10 5 F	11 6 F
Copenhagen	15 8 R	16 9 R
Delhi	28 18 R	29 19 R
Dublin	11 7 F	12 8 F
Hankou	10 5 F	11 6 F
Harbin	10 5 F	11 6 F
Hong Kong	24 13 S	25 14 S
London	12 7 R	13 8 R
Madrid	22 10 S	23 11 S
Moscow	11 6 F	12 7 F
Paris	10 5 F	11 6 F
Rangoon	28 18 R	29 19 R
Rome	17 8 F	18 9 F
Singapore	28 18 R	29 19 R
Tientsin	10 5 F	11 6 F
Yokohama	10 5 F	11 6 F

Around the world

City	Today	Tomorrow
Algeria	24 13 S	25 14 S
Amsterdam	15 8 R	16 9 R
Athens	20 12 S	21 13 S
Berlin	13 8 R	14 9 R
Bombay	27 19 R	28 20 R
Buenos Aires	10 7 F	11 8 F
Calcutta	28 18 R	29 19 R
Cairo	24 13 S	25 14 S
Cardiff	12 7 R	13 8 R
Chicago	10 5 F	11 6 F
Copenhagen	15 8 R	16 9 R
Delhi	28 18 R	29 19 R
Dublin	11 7 F	12 8 F
Hankou	10 5 F	11 6 F
Harbin	10 5 F	11 6 F
Hong Kong	24 13 S	25 14 S
London	12 7 R	13 8 R
Madrid	22 10 S	23 11 S
Moscow	11 6 F	12 7 F
Paris	10 5 F	11 6 F
Rangoon	28 18 R	29 19 R
Rome	17 8 F	18 9 F
Singapore	28 18 R	29 19 R
Tientsin	10 5 F	11 6 F
Yokohama	10 5 F	11 6 F

European weather outlook

Scandinavia: Norway and Denmark will have a mostly cloudy and grey day with outbreaks of rain spreading from the west with snow over the mountains. Rain will then spread south and east during the day and most places can expect an outbreak of rain at some stage, but it will brighten up in the Low Countries this afternoon with some sunny spells.

France: Any early rain in eastern France should soon clear away to leave a fine, bright day in most places with spells of warm sunshine. Max temp 15-21°C with rain from north to south.

Spain and Portugal: Central and northern regions of Iberia can expect to have a mixed day with sunny spells and a scattering of mostly light showers. Further south it will be fine and warm with plenty of sunshine. Highs 18-24°C.

Italy: A mostly dry and bright day with banks of cloud and sunshine from time to time, but one or two scattered showers are possible, and more general rain may reach the far north later. Max temp 18-22°C.

Germany: A rather cool and showery weekend in most places, but always some sunshine between the showers. Highs 10-19°C.

Television and radio - Saturday

BBC 1
7:00am The Park Parade Show, 7:25 News, 8:00am Breakfast, 8:30am The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest, 9:00am The Muppet Show, 9:30am The Simpsons, 10:00am The Simpsons, 10:30am The Simpsons, 11:00am The Simpsons, 11:30am The Simpsons, 12:00pm The Simpsons, 12:30pm The Simpsons, 1:00pm The Simpsons, 1:30pm The Simpsons, 2:00pm The Simpsons, 2:30pm The Simpsons, 3:00pm The Simpsons, 3:30pm The Simpsons, 4:00pm The Simpsons, 4:30pm The Simpsons, 5:00pm The Simpsons, 5:30pm The Simpsons, 6:00pm The Simpsons, 6:30pm The Simpsons, 7:00pm The Simpsons, 7:30pm The Simpsons, 8:00pm The Simpsons, 8:30pm The Simpsons, 9:00pm The Simpsons, 9:30pm The Simpsons, 10:00pm The Simpsons, 10:30pm The Simpsons, 11:00pm The Simpsons, 11:30pm The Simpsons, 12:00am The Simpsons.

BBC 2
6:55am F1: Live, 7:00am News, 7:25am News, 7:50am News, 8:00am News, 8:30am News, 9:00am News, 9:30am News, 10:00am News, 10:30am News, 11:00am News, 11:30am News, 12:00pm News, 12:30pm News, 1:00pm News, 1:30pm News, 2:00pm News, 2:30pm News, 3:00pm News, 3:30pm News, 4:00pm News, 4:30pm News, 5:00pm News, 5:30pm News, 6:00pm News, 6:30pm News, 7:00pm News, 7:30pm News, 8:00pm News, 8:30pm News, 9:00pm News, 9:30pm News, 10:00pm News, 10:30pm News, 11:00pm News, 11:30pm News, 12:00am News.

BBC Prime
6:00am Victorian Ways of Death, 7:00am News, 7:25am News, 7:50am News, 8:00am News, 8:30am News, 9:00am News, 9:30am News, 10:00am News, 10:30am News, 11:00am News, 11:30am News, 12:00pm News, 12:30pm News, 1:00pm News, 1:30pm News, 2:00pm News, 2:30pm News, 3:00pm News, 3:30pm News, 4:00pm News, 4:30pm News, 5:00pm News, 5:30pm News, 6:00pm News, 6:30pm News, 7:00pm News, 7:30pm News, 8:00pm News, 8:30pm News, 9:00pm News, 9:30pm News, 10:00pm News, 10:30pm News, 11:00pm News, 11:30pm News, 12:00am News.

BBC World
6:00am World News and Weather, 6:30am World News and Weather, 7:00am World News and Weather, 7:30am World News and Weather, 8:00am World News and Weather, 8:30am World News and Weather, 9:00am World News and Weather, 9:30am World News and Weather, 10:00am World News and Weather, 10:30am World News and Weather, 11:00am World News and Weather, 11:30am World News and Weather, 12:00am World News and Weather.

Television and radio - Sunday

BBC 1
8:45am The Flying Doctors, 9:30am Breakfast, 10:00am The Big Breakfast, 10:45am The Big Breakfast, 11:15am The Big Breakfast, 11:45am The Big Breakfast, 12:15pm The Big Breakfast, 12:45pm The Big Breakfast, 1:15pm The Big Breakfast, 1:45pm The Big Breakfast, 2:15pm The Big Breakfast, 2:45pm The Big Breakfast, 3:15pm The Big Breakfast, 3:45pm The Big Breakfast, 4:15pm The Big Breakfast, 4:45pm The Big Breakfast, 5:15pm The Big Breakfast, 5:45pm The Big Breakfast, 6:15pm The Big Breakfast, 6:45pm The Big Breakfast, 7:15pm The Big Breakfast, 7:45pm The Big Breakfast, 8:15pm The Big Breakfast, 8:45pm The Big Breakfast, 9:15pm The Big Breakfast, 9:45pm The Big Breakfast, 10:15pm The Big Breakfast, 10:45pm The Big Breakfast, 11:15pm The Big Breakfast, 11:45pm The Big Breakfast, 12:15am The Big Breakfast.

BBC 2
8:30am Joe 90, 8:35pm Playboys, 8:45pm The Big Breakfast, 9:30pm The Big Breakfast, 10:00pm The Big Breakfast, 10:30pm The Big Breakfast, 11:00pm The Big Breakfast, 11:30pm The Big Breakfast, 12:00am The Big Breakfast.

BBC Prime
6:00am Victorian Ways of Death, 7:00am News, 7:25am News, 7:50am News, 8:00am News, 8:30am News, 9:00am News, 9:30am News, 10:00am News, 10:30am News, 11:00am News, 11:30am News, 12:00pm News, 12:30pm News, 1:00pm News, 1:30pm News, 2:00pm News, 2:30pm News, 3:00pm News, 3:30pm News, 4:00pm News, 4:30pm News, 5:00pm News, 5:30pm News, 6:00pm News, 6:30pm News, 7:00pm News, 7:30pm News, 8:00pm News, 8:30pm News, 9:00pm News, 9:30pm News, 10:00pm News, 10:30pm News, 11:00pm News, 11:30pm News, 12:00am News.

BBC World
6:00am World News and Weather, 6:30am World News and Weather, 7:00am World News and Weather, 7:30am World News and Weather, 8:00am World News and Weather, 8:30am World News and Weather, 9:00am World News and Weather, 9:30am World News and Weather, 10:00am World News and Weather, 10:30am World News and Weather, 11:00am World News and Weather, 11:30am World News and Weather, 12:00am World News and Weather.

E will stay a ning issue 11 2002

Madonna



Robert Dewey Hoskins trailed her for five years. Jailed in March for ten years. Described as an "extremely dangerous individual".

Diana



Followed by Liam Whitney and Klaus Wagner, left. Whitney bound over to keep the peace. Court injunction taken out against Wagner.

Margaret Bent



Dennis Chambers cleared of "causing grievous bodily harm with intent". Chambers had allegedly followed Bent everywhere.

Perry Southall



Followed and harassed for eight months by Clarence Morris. Morris found guilty last month of two charges of assault. Awaiting sentence.



New law to give stalkers five years in jail

Duncan Campbell looks at legislation that will also affect journalists and abusive neighbours

STALKERS face up to five years in jail under legislation announced by the Government yesterday. The move comes after growing pressure for action from victims of stalkers, women's organisations and the police. Two new criminal offences and a new civil procedure will be put forward in a Private Member's Bill and are likely to have overwhelming support. The moves were broadly welcomed by anti-stalking campaigners and the opposition parties yesterday. Yesterday's announcement is an indication of how far the perception of stalking has changed in the last five years. From being an issue that the public was only dimly aware of, stalking has now been recognised as a source of great distress not only to people in the public eye but to thousands of people who have felt that the law has let them down badly. The new law, when it comes into effect, may be used not only against persistent stalkers but also against door-stepping journalists, abusive neighbours and racial harassers. Members of the intelligence services and the law enforcement agencies will be exempt

Offences and defences

It will be illegal to: "Use words or behaviour, on more than one occasion, which would put the victim in fear of violence." Maximum penalty: five years imprisonment, unlimited fine, or both. "Use words or behaviour, on more than one occasion, which would cause the victim to be harassed, alarmed or distressed."

Maximum penalty: six months imprisonment, a £5,000 fine, or both. Restraining injunction will be available through civil courts, a breach would be a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment or an unlimited fine, or both. The actions can be defended in criminal and civil proceedings if they are carried out in the interests of national security; for the prevention, detection or investigation of crime by law enforcement officers; or under statutory authority. For the lower level criminal offence and civil action, there is a defence if someone is "reasonably and necessarily in pursuit of a business, trade or profession, or other lawful act".

there will be consensus across the floor of the House and it will go on to the statute book," she said of the Bill. The Government had claimed there were too many legal loopholes in Ms Anderson's proposal and did not support it. Shadow Home Secretary Jack Straw was also guarded in his support: "Effective action to tackle stalking could already have been law if the Government had not churlishly blocked Janet Anderson's bill last May. But now they have taken this issue over, the Government must give it the priority it deserves." Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman Alan Beith criticised the way the law was being introduced. "This matter is far too urgent to be left to a Private Members bill," he said. The police have long campaigned for legislative action on stalking and both the Police Federation and the Association of Chief Police Officers (Acpo) welcomed the news last night, although interpreting the law may present the service with delicate problems of interpretation. Maria Wallis, the assistant Chief Constable of Sussex, who speaks on stalking for Acpo, said: "Police intervention needs to commence at an early stage to ensure adequate protection for victims." Tracy Sant, victim of the first stalker jailed for inflicting psychological harm, welcomed the bill. Ms Sant, aged 28, was hounded by former serviceman Anthony Burstow, aged 36, before he was jailed in March. "I am happy to hear that finally victims are going to have a light at the end of the tunnel," said Ms Sant. The bill will apply to England and Wales but will contain provisions appropriate to Scottish law.

Maggie O'Kane reviews four cases

Notes warning of plots against Diana were left almost daily

DIANA, Princess of Wales, has had been followed by at least two stalkers: Klaus Wagner, 37, who shadowed her for six months to warn her of "plots" against her and a 36-year-old Irishman, Liam Whitney, with a psychiatric history. Mr Whitney broke into the grounds of Kensington Palace, where she lives, twice in three months, and told police he was "staying with Diana". He was bound over to keep the peace for a year and fined £50.

"He followed me constantly and seemed to take joy out of it"

DENNIS Chambers was cleared last month of "causing grievous bodily harm with intent". Mr Chambers, aged 37, of no fixed address, had been accused by Margaret Bent of stalking her. "I can't believe this is happening," a tearful Ms Bent said as she left the court. "He had been following me around constantly and seemed to take a lot of joy out of doing it." The case was thrown out of court after Judge Quentin Campbell directed the jury to acquit Mr Chambers. The judge said it was "extremely

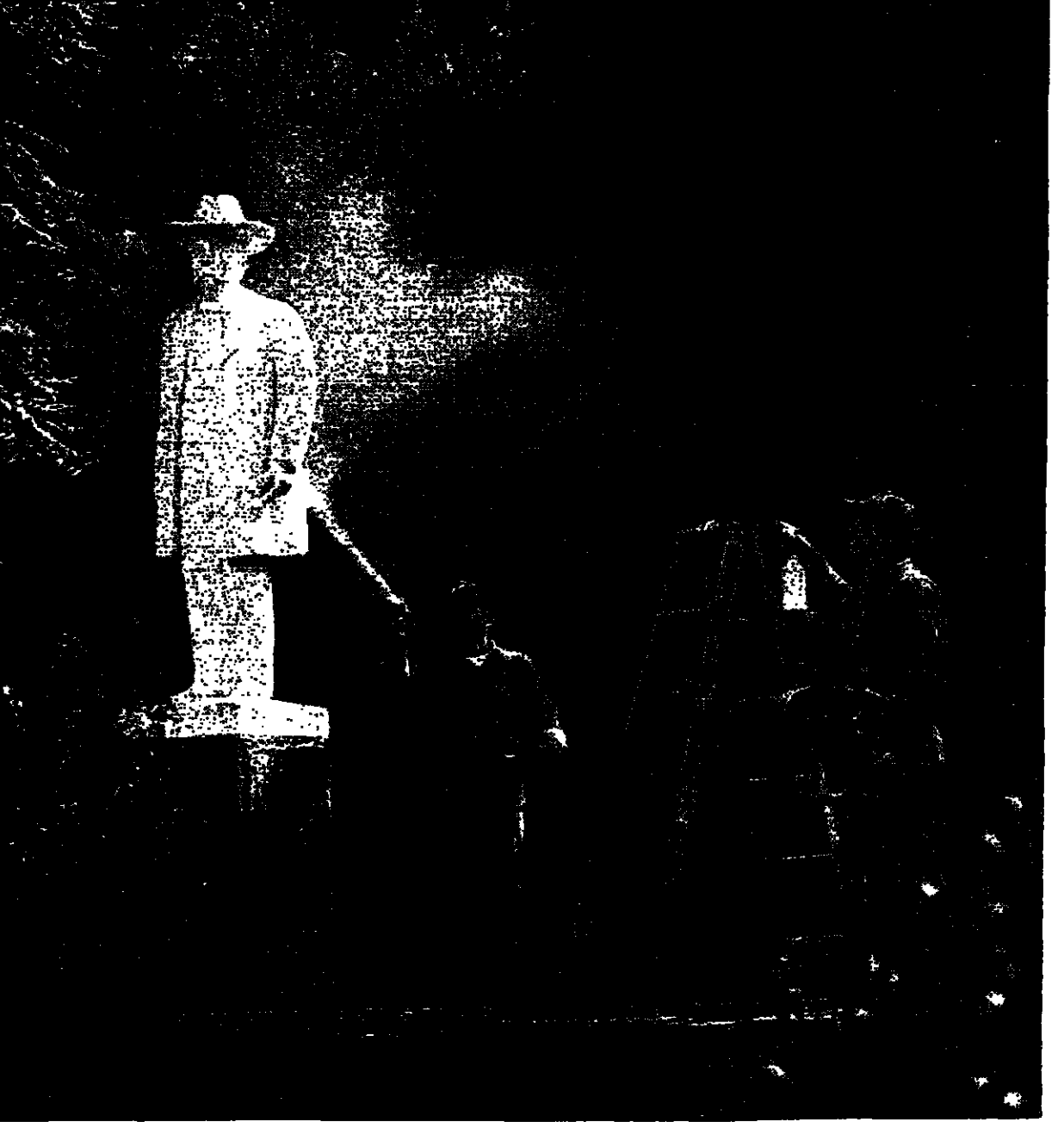
Accused of 'behaving like queen bee that dresses to kill'

PERRY Southall, aged 30, endured an eight month campaign of terror by Clarence Morris, a convicted rapist, who was found guilty last month of two charges of assault. The court ruled that the mental torture she suffered was tantamount to a physical assault. Morris, 37, is awaiting sentence. The case was highly controversial because of the sexist remarks of the defence barrister, who accused the victim of "behaving like a queen bee that dresses to kill". The barrister, Denis Stanton, was reported to the Bar Council and rebuked by the judge for remarks that were critical of Ms Southall for allegedly modelling herself on the "over-exposed and sexually active" Baywatch character played by Pamela Anderson in the television series. The judge declared that the remarks were an insult to Ms Southall. She was subjected to 200 incidents and confrontations. Morris had threatened her twice with a wallpaper scraper and had thrown women's underwear into the reception of the dental practice where she worked. The judge concluded the case saying: "Women have the right to dress however they wish and it should not be seen as an open invitation to harassment."

He would 'slice her from ear to ear unless she married him'

ROBERT Dewey Hoskins, 40, followed Madonna across the US for five years before he was jailed for 10 years in March 1996. Madonna, 38, told a court how Hoskins had threatened to "slice her from ear to ear" unless she married him. She told a court in Los Angeles she felt "incredibly disturbed" when he stalked out her Hollywood mansion, and that she had been haunted by nightmares about him. A loner and homeless, Hoskins was shot

Speaking at a trust seminar in London, Mrs Lamplugh said she was asking the Home Office to set up a helpline and network for victims to provide mutual support for each other. Labour MP Janet Anderson, who earlier this year made an unsuccessful attempt to get her own stalking bill accepted, said she was pleased the Government had listened. "Assuming it meets our concerns, I can assure you



If you'd like to know more about our unique whiskey, write to us for a free booklet at the Jack Daniel Distillery, Lynchburg, Tennessee 37352 USA.

HOW MANY MEN does it take to keep Mr. Jack Daniel's statue clean? The answer is, there's never a shortage of folks here at our distillery willing to give Mr. Jack a good scrubbing. You see, our founder was a proud man. He was proud of his Tennessee Whiskey and the gold medals it won. We're proud of the same things—and of Mr. Jack. And we're nearly as particular about keeping his statue tidy as we are of making Jack Daniel's Whiskey the way he did. One sip, we believe, will explain why we feel the way we do.



JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

BSE is only a symptom of the insanity that is affecting food producers. Technology, it seems, is running out of control. What's your poison?

The Week page 17

News in brief

Parents condemn school ban on boy, 5

THE parents of a five-year-old boy who hit his headmaster and but a teacher have condemned the school's decision to expel him. Paul and Maureen Fedarb, who are appealing against the move, blame their son David's tantrums on an attack by a dog when he was a toddler.

Hume urges Derry calm

SDLP leader John Hume last night appealed to nationalist residents of Londonderry not to stage a counter-demonstration to today's loyalist Apprentice Boys parade in the city. In a last-ditch attempt to defuse a potentially dangerous situation, the Foyle MP said the Apprentice Boys should be allowed to march unhindered — and he believed the vast majority of nationalists in the city agreed.

Drug dealer 'loses' child

A FOSTER mother has been awarded interim custody of the daughter of a Jamaican woman due to be deported after serving a jail sentence for dealing in crack cocaine. Helen Osborne, aged 40, from Perth, challenged Perth Sheriff John McInnes' ruling that four-year-old Fiona Matthan, should be returned to her mother Althea, aged 21. Yesterday, three judges at the Court of Session in Edinburgh ruled that the child should remain in Mrs Osborne's care until her future is decided after a detailed investigation by a sheriff.

Channel 5 in Easter launch

CHANNEL 5 is to launch on Easter Sunday, March 30, next year. It was confirmed yesterday. Britain's last mainstream terrestrial channel secured approval from the Independent Television Commission to delay its original launch date by three months to provide more time to visit 13 million homes to return video recorders to ensure its signal does not interfere with them. The channel expects to reach 65 to 70 per cent of homes on the first day, increasing to 85 per cent by the end of 1997.

Greens plead to drop bypass

THE controversial £76 million Salisbury bypass will do irreparable damage to the area, environment groups told the Government yesterday. In an open letter to Transport Secretary Sir George Young and Environment Secretary John Gummer urging the scheme to be dropped, 10 organisations said the impact of the 11-mile scheme was not justified on strategic grounds, could not solve the Wiltshire city's traffic problems, and "would do great and irreparable damage to the environment and landscape setting of Salisbury and to the wildlife and ecology of one of Europe's finest chalk stream systems".

Punter forgot £1m win

A PUNTER who won £343,636 and then disappeared has turned up — unaware he was a winner. Brian Greene, a hotel chef in his 30s, walked out of a Ladbrokes betting shop in Birmingham on Saturday after watching the last of the six horses in his £1 each way accumulator romp home. But Ladbrokes could not find him until he returned to the Sparckhill shop last night — to make another bet. "I can't believe that Ladbrokes have been so honest," he said. A company spokesman explained: "He had apparently changed his mind about one of his selections at the last minute and forgot that a 20-1 winner was his choice. When he didn't say anything the shop manageress gave him the good news and he nearly fainted."

A game of other halves
Footballers' wives: the cars, the houses, the fancy frocks, the lonely nights wondering...
The Observer

Man's body is believed to have fallen from wheel well as aircraft prepared for landing at Heathrow
Jet stowaway died of cold

Vivek Chaudhary

A MAN believed to have been a stowaway, who fell out of an aircraft heading for Heathrow Airport, died of hypothermia, a post-mortem examination revealed yesterday. The body of the man, who has not been named, was discovered on Wednesday in a disused gasworks in Richmond, Surrey — six miles from the airport. He is believed to have hidden in the undercarriage housing. He suffered multiple injuries consistent with a fall from a great height. Police are now trying to establish whether the man, an Indian national aged 19, whose family have yet to be informed of his death, was travelling with another stowaway, also an Indian national, who was discovered wandering near Heathrow's Terminal 4 on Sunday.

A part of Richmond which lies under the flightpath to the airport, at a point where planes would be lowering their undercarriages for final approach. His friend was found last Sunday, also suffering from hypothermia, hiding under the belly of a British Airways plane, and was detained by airline staff. He was described as being "poorly and almost unable to walk". The man, who has not been named, was treated in hospital and is being held at Harmondsworth detention centre, close to the airport, where he has applied for leave to enter the United Kingdom. A spokesman for the Immigration Department said: "He has been interviewed and we are now dealing with his request for leave to enter the UK."

"We are still trying to establish whether the two men were travelling together but there is no suggestion that the dead man was pushed out of the aeroplane. This is a very difficult case because there is a lot of emotional sensitivities involved." British Airways has launched an investigation into how the two men managed to hide on the aircraft. The case has highlighted the perils of aeroplane stowaways, most of whom tend to conceal themselves in the undercarriage area, putting their lives at risk. The number of aircraft stowaways is still relatively small, averaging between three to four cases each year. Most either end up dying of hypothermia or dying of severe injuries after being mangled by the undercarriage after take-off. There are however, no official statistics on the number of aircraft stowaways who are discovered each year. Kieran Daly, of Flight International magazine, said: "It's a very risky business and quite often, those who attempt it end up dying. There is plenty of space in the well of the undercarriage but there is a fair chance that you will either freeze to death or be crushed by the undercarriage. While the number of stowaways is relatively small, it is a problem that has been going on for some years now."

Most airlines now carry out stringent headcounts and searches of cargo hold areas before aeroplanes take off. Mr Daly added: "It's virtually impossible for a stowaway to board a plane or hide in the hold. But with airports being such large places, it's much easier for them to sneak into the undercarriage well." The last such stowaway to be detected was a Russian who was found frozen to death after an Aeroflot plane landed at Rome in September.

Moving tale of the family from hell

Sarah Boseley hears a mother's cry for help

A MOTHER of eight who has been forced to move house 11 times in 10 years is facing possible eviction again after neighbours have launched a petition to drive out the "family from hell". Jenny White — whose boys are banned from supermarkets and buses — says they are neither mad nor bad, but suffering from attention deficit disorder. Neighbours have objected to the children breaking sabbings, kicking milk bottles and smashing car windows. One said: "They have run riot all over our front gardens and climb over our sheds. They even chased my cat with a big stick. When they go to the local shops they unleash any dogs tied up. Their sole aim is to find trouble. We want them out."



Little terrors... Jenny White with three of her sons Paul, Leo and Billy who, she says, suffer from attention deficit disorder. PHOTOGRAPH: RUSSELL SACH

Ms White's husband Shane, father of her youngest child, one-year-old Nico, left earlier this year. She said: "We have had to move so often because neighbours have kept a log of all the things the kids do. "And when we move it seems the old neighbours tell the new ones so we start day one at a new place facing hostility from the neighbours."

Billy, aged 10, is on Ritalin, the drug often prescribed for Attention Deficit Disorder, or hyperactivity. Paul, aged nine, is about to start at a special school and his mother says he may need to go on medication soon. Ms White has a letter from social services confirming that the children's problems include "aggressive, disruptive behaviour with a short attention span, poor concentration, poor sleeping patterns, high anxiety and low self-esteem". She admits she cannot control her children. She said: "When they watched Rambo they became fascinated by knives and guns. They would steal my cutlery knives and put them in their socks. They

have thrown knives at each other." She decided violent films were a poor idea, so hired Mary Poppins. "The next day they were running over the roofs of the houses. They watched the musical Oliver and started pick-pocketing and when they saw Mutant Ninja Turtles they went outside and managed to lift up a

drain. I got to them just as they were beginning to climb down the drain to meet the turtles." Ms White says she would like her latest neighbours to take into account the boys' problems. She is tired of being moved from one council house to another. "I just want to live in a happy home with the children," she said.

Goldsmith's Referendum Party 'aiding Labour win'

As the new party gathers for its first rally, its supporters seem not to be much worried that they could help elect Tony Blair. Michael White reports

THE Referendum Party's intervention in the next general election could help elect a Labour government more sympathetic to European integration than John Major's, key advisers to Sir James Goldsmith admitted last night. As a predicted 3,000 supporters gathered for their first party conference in Brighton today, Sir James promised to use his speech this afternoon to expose the "consistent history of deception" over Europe and to force an early referendum on federalism. But he faced mockery from rivals on the right and accusations of myth-peddling from the European Movement as well as charges of intolerance against those who have disagreed with him. Arriving to a VIP news-media scrum at the Grand Hotel on the seaford, the billionaire financier was questioned about why some reporters for the Daily Mirror and Daily Telegraph had been denied credentials to attend the conference. He insisted that any bona-fide journalist could attend: "We seek a debate." He responded to John Major's dismissal of his embryonic party, which claims 50,000 members as "a fringe organisation" that would not dam-

age Tory hopes of a fifth term. "It's not for him to decide. It's not for us. Let the people decide," Sir James said. The self-declared aim of the party, in which £20 million of Goldsmith money will be invested if needed, is to force a full-scale anti-federalist referendum and then dissolve itself. Mr Major has so far conceded no more than a referendum if he seeks to join a single currency, which Sir James dismisses as "only a trivial point" compared with sovereignty which has already been lost. But his supporters are all aware that they could help elect Tony Blair by costing the Tories marginal seats. Lord McAlpine, now a Goldsmith ally, said: "I'm not scared of it [a Blair win]. I

'Unless we get the issue of Europe sorted we might as well be talking about village whist drives for that is all we shall be allowed to talk about.'

actually think that's probably what would happen. I think John Major and his Cabinet should be scared of it and I think that they should actually announce there is going to be a referendum." Another supporter, Thatcher's former economic adviser, Sir Alan Walters, was unperturbed. "If that did happen it would be a Labour government with a slim majority and looking over its shoulder all the time." Lord Archer yesterday again predicted that at least 20 Tory seats could be at risk while the Economist magazine estimated that, even with

0.5 per cent of the vote, the Goldsmith forces could cost the Tories four seats. Sir James and his leading supporters, many of them well-to-do London figures from the Tory right, marked the start of their conference last night with a series of dinners for the 180 candidates already chosen and for friends and what Sir James calls "opinion-formers" in the media. The actor, Edward Fox, unveiled the first of a series of posters proclaiming: "Britannia Does Not Rule Okay" and said: "Unless we get the issue of Europe sorted out we might as well be talking about village whist drives because that is all we shall be allowed to talk about."

Along the seaford, Doctor Alan Sked, head of the rival UK Independence Party, prepared to unveil four defectors from the Goldsmith camp while in Maldstone, Michael Howard, targeted by the Referendum Party in Folkestone despite his Euro-sceptic credentials, publicly welcomed back the former MP, Tim Brinton, from Sir James's side. Doctor Sked is holding his own public meeting in Brighton today to publicise his argument that without total withdrawal from the EU a Goldsmith-style referendum would leave Britain "in exactly the same mess it is in regardless of the outcome of the referendum". Today's conference promises to be as much a rally as a traditional party conference with speeches by leading supporters, including Christopher Booker, the journalist, John Aspinall, the zookeeper, and Charles de Gaulle MEP, an ally of Sir James's Euro-group in Strasbourg.

Mr Major and his colleagues have dismissed the Referendum Party as a one-man band. But at least one Tory MP targeted at the next election is expressing concern that the criteria being used are not purely political.

Supporters



PETER de SAVARY, aged 51. Flamboyant businessman and sailor, who owns a shipyard in Cornwall. He has warned that creating a European superstate could lead to civil war



EDWARD FOX, aged 59. He plans to address the conference today on "why referenda are part of the British tradition". His support for Sir James led to widespread publicity for the Referendum Party



JOHN ASPINALL, aged 70. Millionaire businessman, zookeeper and owner of a Mayfair gambling club, he has described the European issue as "the most important question since 1839" for Britain



VISCOUNT TONY PANDY, aged 86. Former Labour Speaker of the House of Commons who used to be known as George Thomas. He has spoken out about domination by Brussels and the threat to UK sovereignty

Michael Spicer, a leading Euro-sceptic, who voted 37 times against the Maastricht Treaty and was one of 97 Tories to support Bill Cash's Referendum Bill in June, faces a challenge in Worcestershire South. He said that his offence was that he had been the first to point out that Sir James's book, The Trap, emphasised European federalism, anti-Americanism and protectionism in its French edition "in

contrast to his anti-federalism when he visits these islands". Mr Spicer said: "He's angry. It's a personal thing because I have pointed out next week when Mr Santer himself would address the Parliament. Sir James is not known as an assiduous attendee of the monthly sessions in Strasbourg, having put in a brief appearance only twice this year."

Testy reply from Santer to challenge for televised debate on Europe

JACQUES Santer, the President of the European Commission, gave a dusty answer in Brussels yesterday to Sir James Goldsmith's demand in newspaper advertisements for a televised debate on Europe, writes Stephen Basses. Showing an unusual degree of testiness, the normally avuncular Mr Santer, a former Prime Minister of Luxembourg, pointed to Sir James's poor record of attendance at the European Parliament — where he sits as a French MEP — and said that if he wanted to debate Europe that was the place to do it. Sir James's advertisement — the culmination of a week of single and double page spreads in national newspapers in the run-up to Europe's Referendum Party conference in Brighton — threw down a challenge to Mr Santer. It said that only by holding a live debate on British television could the issues the party had raised be fully debated and the truth publicly established. "We look forward to Mr Santer's reply," it added. Pointing out that Sir James was an "eminent" member of the European Parliament, leader of the all-French 12-member grouping of his L'Autre Europe part, Mr Santer said that was the best place for him to raise his concerns. He added that Sir James had not turned up for a recent debate on the future of Europe but would have another opportunity to do so next week when Mr Santer himself would address the Parliament. Sir James is not known as an assiduous attendee of the monthly sessions in Strasbourg, having put in a brief appearance only twice this year.

Affirmative action takes toll on Dole in California



Christopher Reed in Los Angeles

THE principal impediment to Bob Dole's "last stand" for the presidency in California is the chairman of his campaign in the Golden State, the governor, Pete Wilson.

An injection of money, a new television campaign in this most politically telegraphic of states, and Mr Dole's creditable performance in Wednesday's debate with President Clinton in San Diego, seem unlikely to overcome a serious tactical error by Mr Wilson.

A shrewd political opportunist, he has a successful record of picking an issue to sweep him and fellow Republicans into office.

In 1994 he was re-elected through the exploitation of illegal immigration. His vehicle was Proposition 187, a referendum that denied most health and educational benefits for undocumented workers. His easy passage helped new Republican members of

Congress as well as Mr Wilson's otherwise colourless campaign.

This year he picked a political dud, and Mr Dole is stuck with it. The issue is affirmative action (positive discrimination). Under Proposition 209, affirmative action would be scrapped in public employment, education and the awarding of business contracts. But the populist favour the governor expects has yet to appear, and Republicans rarely even mention it.

Last year, when Mr Wilson still nurtured his own presidential ambitions, he regarded Proposition 209 as the ideal vehicle on which to ride into the White House. With its undertone of racial politics, it offered the promise of a repeat of 1994.

Unfortunately for Mr Wilson, his candidacy collapsed early in the Republican primaries. Yet he and his allies at the party's head remain so committed to the issue, it is still the key tactic for a Republican victory in California.

For months Mr Wilson has urged the Dole campaign to embrace the proposition wholeheartedly, as a sure way of galvanising Republicans and attracting floating white voters resentful of "reverse discrimination".

Until this week Mr Dole remained sceptical, concerned that the issue might spur even greater numbers of blacks and Hispanic Democrats to vote in its defence. The choice of Jack Kemp for the vice-presidency reflected his caution: Mr Kemp's civil rights record has made him popular among African-Americans.

Both candidates now endorse the proposition, although the issue shows no signs of a sufficient revival to justify Mr Wilson's enthusiasm. Big businesses, including two leading power suppliers, the Hewlett-Packard computer company and six chambers of commerce, have come out against it. Other businessmen have remained silent, but have withheld cash donations.

"Affirmative action is not like immigration," said an analyst. "It's not illegal, it's not costing taxpayers millions in services, and its beneficiaries can't be blamed for annoyances like graffiti or crime."

"Most important of all, its chief beneficiaries are women, just the voters Dole and Kemp already have most difficulty attracting."

Mr Wilson talks of "fairness" and "a level playing field". But in a private telephone conference last month

seeking support from 60 business leaders, Mr Wilson and his guest, the House Speaker Newt Gingrich, were astonishingly frank. It would not have mattered, except that, unknown to them, a reporter was eavesdropping.

The governor argued that the issue "works strongly to our advantage and has the potential to make a critical difference in the race for Dole and House members". Mr Gingrich added that it was "vital to keep control of the House".

He insisted that it would keep Mr Clinton spending funds and time in California, fighting for its 54 electoral college votes, the election's biggest prize.

Mr Clinton leads Mr Dole by nine points here, and has secured support through 30 visits to California during his presidency. The state's economy is booming and Mr Dole's warnings of future crisis have not dented a cautiously optimistic mood among voters.

Meanwhile, affirmative action has become just another proposition among 14 others on the November 5 ballot.

Its failure to resonate leaves a policy vacuum that even Democrat cash infusions from Indonesian billionaires cannot fill.



Bob Dole meets supporters at a campaign rally in Albuquerque, New Mexico, yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: JIM JEWOURG

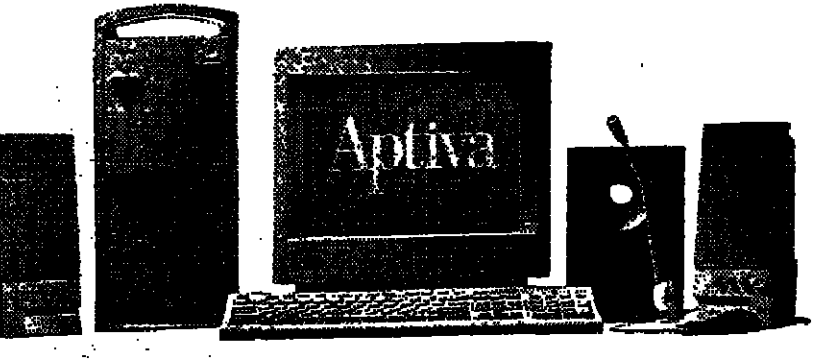
Aptiva. It's just like being at the office, only the coffee is better.



- Working at home on Aptiva has lots of advantages - and not just at 11 o'clock.
- From 9 to 5, you can enjoy the perfect working environment courtesy of Lotus SmartSuite '96 - including the latest word processor, spreadsheet and database software.
 - The Integral Communications Centre also gives you e-mail, phone, answerphone, fax and one-button Internet access! And, with Wake Up on Ring, you'll never be caught napping by people back at the office, as Aptiva will power up automatically the moment it detects an incoming call or fax. What's more, although Aptiva conserves energy by dozing off between tasks, the Rapid Resume Manager means that, after a coffee break, it goes straight back to work at the point where you left off.
 - Finally, at the end of a long day, Aptiva's multimedia capabilities are an excellent way to relax. Total Image Video, 3D graphics and TheatreSound™ make Aptiva the ultimate multimedia PC for playing games and CDs. Distractions include: Mech Warrior II, Battle Beast and ActuaSoccer, plus a whole host of other games to test your strategic skills.

You even have your own IT support in the shape of IBM HelpWare® - our telephone helpline will be there to give you friendly advice and guidance 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

If this has got you thirsting for more, just call Penny Ashbourne on: 0990 72 72 72 and we'll give you details of your nearest PC retailer.



Aptiva

Have a break, have a demo at your local PC retailer.

IBM

Solutions for a small planet

IBM HelpWare/www.pc.ibm.com *Specification varies according to model. **Integrity of IBM Corporation. Subject to registration procedures with ISP 1 year free telephone support for hardware and 60 days for software. Copyright IBM Corporation 1996. SmartSuite is a trademark of Lotus Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

News in brief

Belgian king joins justice protest

BELGIUM'S King Albert joined the rising tide of demands for a complete overhaul of the justice system yesterday as tens of thousands of people took to the streets across the country for the fourth day running.

There were some minor clashes between protesters and police and traffic was halted by demonstrators outraged at the bungling and incompetence revealed by the country's paedophile murder scandal.

As Brussels prepared for what one newspaper dubbed "the march of the century" on Sunday in support of the parents of dead and missing children, a top minister warned the government could topple. "If the government does not listen to the public and does not make sure that the investigation can continue perfectly, it could fall," said the interior minister, Johan Vande Lanotte. — *Reuters, Brussels.*

Swiss admit Polish deal

SWITZERLAND acknowledged yesterday that it did a secret deal with Poland in 1948 to liquidate Polish citizens' unclaimed wealth, but denied charges that this had let it keep the property of Jewish Holocaust victims.

Under the arrangement, unclaimed Polish funds in Switzerland were to be turned over to Poland's central bank.

"Various sides alleged yesterday that Switzerland struck a secret accord with Poland after the second world war that let Switzerland seize for itself dormant assets of Polish citizens," a Swiss foreign ministry statement said. "This allegation is wrong."

Switzerland has denied an assertion from Alfonso D'Amato, the chairman of the US Senate banking committee, that Berne struck deals that let it tap the unclaimed wealth of Eastern European Jews to compensate Swiss citizens for property nationalised by communist regimes. — *Reuters, Zurich.*

Turks face human rights trial

IN the most sweeping prosecution of Turkish authorities for alleged human rights abuses, 11 police officers went on trial yesterday for the death of a journalist in detention.

Another 37 police officers face charges of using excessive force on hundreds of people at the funeral of two inmates killed in prison riots. The trial in the western city of Aydin is being closely watched by Turkey's Western allies as a test of its resolve to improve its human rights record. None of the 48 defendants was present at the trial.

Meanwhile, an appeal court upheld a 20-month suspended sentence given to the author Yasar Kemal on charges of Kurdish separatism and inciting hatred among the people for an article he wrote attacking the government's handling of the Kurdish insurgency. — *Agencies.*

Iraq may have secret arsenal

THE chief United Nations arms inspector to Iraq, Rolf Ekus, arrived in Baghdad today to voice suspicion that Saddam Hussein's regime still harbours a secret arsenal of deadly chemical and biological weapons.

The UN team is also concerned about secret work being carried out on long-range missiles that could strike into the heart of Europe.

Mr Ekus believes there are more revelations to come. He wants to know what became of 300 tonnes of anthrax, large quantities of botulinum toxin, which kills by food poisoning, supplies of aflatoxin, a fungi that causes slow death by cancer, and 300 tonnes of V-X, a harder form of Sarin gas, which was used last year in the Tokyo underground attack that killed 12 people. — *Maggie O'Kane, Baghdad and a have-a-go hero, Weekend, page 28*

KDP retakes strategic town

MOVING forward after a week of setbacks, the Iraqi-backed Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) yesterday retook the strategic town of Koy Sanjak, which straddles the highway to northern Iraq's regional capital, Irbil.

With its capture of the town, the KDP has succeeded in pushing its Iranian-sponsored rivals, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), further away from Irbil, which lies about 30 miles to the north-west.

As the two groups battled east, south-east and north-east of the regional capital, there was no sign that Iraqi troops had helped their KDP allies. — *AP, Koy Sanjak.*

UK ignorance stuns French

BRITISH students are the bookworms of Europe, according to a study for the French ministry of culture. But young Britons are also the most ignorant about foreign writers.

French pollsters who interviewed more than 6,000 third-year university students in Britain, France, Italy, Spain and Germany could not hide their shock at British ignorance: "More than half revealed themselves incapable of citing a single French author!"

Asked what French books they had read, most Britons (44 per cent) said the Asterix cartoons. Asked to name English-language authors, 50 per cent of French students name Shakespeare first, followed by Agatha Christie and Oscar Wilde.

The British are the most avid readers but are most likely to own a television — 73 per cent said time was spent in front of the box, against 69 per cent of French. — *Alex Duxall Smith, Paris.*

Lebed loses Chechenia too

Fears for peace as new envoy sought

James Meek in Moscow

THE fragile peace engineered in Chechnia by Alexander Lebed appeared to be in trouble yesterday as the Kremlin confirmed that the reserve general, already sacked from his main national security posts by Boris Yeltsin, will no longer be in charge of talks with the separatists.

Without General Lebed's authority to hustle and bully the talks along, there is a danger that groups opposed to the separatists' growing power will provoke a new conflict.

These include the Russian interior ministry, headed by General Anatoly Kulikov, who led the movement against Gen Lebed this week, and Chechen police loyal to Moscow.

Gen Lebed, who celebrated his freedom from state office yesterday with a visit to the theatre to see a play about Ivan the Terrible — "to learn how to rule" — may be secretly relieved at the announcement, which absolves him of blame for any collapse in the negotiations and allows him to concentrate on his political ambitions.

There were few voices raised in Russia's ruling circles yesterday against the president's melodramatic video dismissal of his chief ally.

But some warned that Gen Lebed's exit from what many Russians consider a den of thieves and rogues will only enhance his public reputation. He could boomerang back into the Kremlin as Mr Yeltsin did after Mikhail Gorbachev dismissed him from the post in 1987, they said.

"Alexander Lebed is a very popular man with the people. And, speaking frankly, I think he is like the Boris Yeltsin of 1987," said Boris Nemtsov, the young, economically liberal governor of Nizhny Novgorod region.

The president's press spokesman, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, said the replacement of Gen Lebed as chief Chechen negotiator was only

a question of time. "New candidates for the job are being discussed now... The federal authorities will adhere strictly to a peaceful course in regulating the Chechen conflict," he added.

The country as a whole and many politicians still in power — including the prime minister, Victor Chernomyrdin — are thought to support the Lebed peace deal.

Trying to keep up the momentum, the separatists made a unilateral announcement yesterday that elections will be held in Chechnia on January 27. But it is unlikely that Moscow will readily accept a date set without its approval.

"Everyone is watching the development of events in Moscow with concern," a rebel spokesman said. "The leaders of Ichkeria [the Chechen name for the territory] think that with the dismissal of Lebed, the key factor in the process of peaceful settlement has been removed."

The rebel information minister, Movladi Udugov, described Mr Yeltsin's action as a cry for help from a man trapped by illness and a manipulative clique of aides.

"Yeltsin is helping Lebed to become Russian president," he said. "He is taking him step by step along the road of his own past... I think Yeltsin, who feels a hostage to his entourage, is doing this deliberately."

In the Russian parliament, the Duma, the degree of hostility towards Gen Lebed was shown by the overwhelming rejection of a motion from the liberal Yabloko faction calling on the president to sack Gen Kulikov as well.

Party leaders like Gennady Zyuganov of the Communists and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy of the nationalist LDPR fear and loathe Gen Lebed for stealing their voters.

"The Duma raised the issue of a peaceful settlement in Chechnia 33 times, but the government drew a decision out so long that the conflict spread to the federal authorities themselves," Mr Zyuganov said.

How the East was won — and lost, page 9



Police frisk men at Moscovsky station, St Petersburg, as security is tightened amid fear of rebel Chechen attacks

PHOTOGRAPH: ALEXANDER DEMIANCHUK

Generals' unlikely political partnership

David Hearst in Moscow

OF ALL the odd marriages thrown up by Russian politics, the coupling of Generals Alexander Lebed and Alexander Korzhakov looks — at first sight — the most curious.

There are many much sater backers that Gen Lebed could have chosen to accompany him in opposition — instead of one who has been up to his neck in intrigue.

Gen Lebed leaves power with a clean image. The same cannot be said of the disgraced grey cardinal of Boris Yeltsin's first presidential term, Gen Korzhakov.

The two generals have appeared together only once, when Gen Lebed — the former paratrooper — was presenting Gen Korzhakov — the

former presidential bodyguard — to an admiring crowd of potential voters in Tula, the home of Gen Lebed's regiment.

Gen Lebed would have a strong chance of winning a presidential election if the ailing President Yeltsin is forced to stand down. He is currently the most popular man in Russia.

Gen Lebed is backing his new ally in the election for the parliamentary seat that Gen Lebed had to give up when Mr Yeltsin appointed him secretary to the Security Council.

The two men have been reticent about their alliance. Asked why he was supporting Gen Korzhakov in his attempts to enter politics, Gen Lebed muttered: "Because that is what I have decided." On another occasion he said:

"He is a patriot, a son of his country. There are no criminal investigations surrounding him." Hardly the best reason for a political liaison.

Gen Korzhakov was even more laconic. Asked who was capable of replacing President Yeltsin, he replied: "Lebed."

Why did Gen Lebed choose him? Gen Lebed does not have a political party. His backers, For Honour and Motherland, are unable to organise across Russia. To be elected, the nationalist general has to present himself as an all-Russian candidate.

Nor does Gen Lebed have good links with the regions. He is not known by the powerful heads of the administration and his financial resources are limited. Out of power, he has only a limited capacity to influence other political leaders.

Gen Korzhakov has plenty of political contacts — many regional bosses were named by President Yeltsin with his help. He also had important links with business.

Gen Korzhakov stretched the concept of "presidential security" to its limits. He was accused of bugging the government, and made it his business to learn everyone's secrets, their infidelities, details of their bank accounts — and the extent to which they were involved in crooked deals.

This knowledge has given him power, and a comfortable insurance policy — as he said in his only press conference — should anyone be so foolish as to arrest him or threaten his family.

Gen Lebed has said he wants no part in this. But the proxy war of claims and

counter-claims is set to continue against the businessmen Vladimir Gusinsky and Boris Berzovsky. To hurt them would be to hurt Anatoly Chubais, the president's chief of staff, who engineered Gen Korzhakov's dismissal.

The other reason Gen Lebed chose him is that, fantastic though it may seem, Gen Korzhakov has electoral appeal. For two years he has created an image for himself as an honest officer of the law fighting corruption.

This strikes the right note for "new" nationalists considering voting for Gen Lebed. Disillusioned by the grab for money in the first stages of privatisation, which benefited the ruling elite, these voters want a slice of the action. Above all they want revenge.

This, Gen Korzhakov can provide in abundance.

Discord looms over EU treaty

Ian Traynor in Bonn

GERMANY and France yesterday moved towards a new showdown with Britain over European Union integration, when they called for their vision of "hard-core" integration to be enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty.

The French and German foreign ministers, Heryé de Charette and Klaus Kinkel, issued a joint paper calling for the insertion into the treaty of "one or several clauses on strengthened co-operation between willing and able member states". It will be submitted to the ongoing EU constitutional conference.

Germany's Chancellor Helmut Kohl said the idea of hard-core integration to President Jacques Chirac last December. Yesterday's proposal fleshes out the deal.

The aim is to amend the Maastricht Treaty to enable small, variable groups of EU members to push ahead in common policy-making on foreign and defence matters, law and order, and immigration and visa issues.

The Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, said last week that Britain was not opposed to greater flexibility in the EU on an ad hoc basis, with Germany and France moving faster towards integration. But Britain may well seek to block moves to institutionalise these powers in EU treaties.

German officials said a draft treaty would be ready within eight weeks for the EU summit in Dublin, and finalised six months later at the Amsterdam summit.

The eastward expansion of the EU is supposed to begin in earnest within six months of the end of the ongoing inter-governmental conference. The scheduled end is next June. Bonn is adamant that the aim of hard-core integration must be realised before further expansion.

Under yesterday's proposal, a general "flexibility clause" would be inserted into the treaty allowing common policy-making in a given area for members who want to join in, and denying veto rights to other members.

While "flexibility" is the new buzzword in Bonn for European policy, the Kohl-Chirac view is that the slowest ship must not be allowed to hold up the convoy.

Unbeatable Bundle Offer!

Take a closer look at this powerful P120, 16MB multimedia PC system with a massive software bundle and FREE B&W Fax/Modem printer. Truly sensational value at just £1172.50 inc. VAT (£998 + VAT).

For even higher performance, recommend our P150+ model which comes with a larger 17" screen and faster 28.8 modem.

For a limited period, for early orders both systems come bundled with a Lexmark Colour Inkjet Printer.

Relative Performance
Relative processor performance based on ZD-Cores WinBench 96 as certified by MDR Labs.

ONLY
£1172.50
inc. VAT
(£998)
+VAT

HURRY OFFER ENDS 26th Oct

FREE
Modem & Colour Printer

Superb Features

- 120MHz Multimedia PC**
 - Intel 120MHz Pentium processor
 - 16MB RAM expansion 128MB
 - 14" colour screen 2880x1024 colour
 - 100MB 1.44MB enhanced IDE hard drive
 - 16MB cache, 32MB CD-ROM drive and parallel/serial ports
 - Fast IDE expansion capabilities IDE, SCSI, external floppy drive for increased productivity
 - Plug & play professional audio and video 7.1ch surround audio in Windows 95
 - 17" 14" display size
 - Enhanced sound and high speed modem
 - 16M Windows 95 keyboard and mouse
 - Creative desktop 7.1ch sound
 - One year warranty extendable to 3 or 5 years
 - Microsoft Windows 95 with manual and CD
 - Large pre-installed software suite including Word Pro, Excel, Lotus 1.2.3, Approach, the Organizer, SmartDraw, SmartDraw, CD-ROM reader, and includes the Windows 95 Desktop, Money 4.0, HomeWare, Internet, and more
 - Free! Quality of Personal Finance Plan
 - FREE! 14" B&W Inkjet printer/modem bundled with FREE! 17" 14" Colour screen
 - Awarded over 2000 accolades
- 16MB RAM** - You need 16MB RAM to best performance with Windows 95. This also allows you to install most local applications at the same time. Do not compromise on RAM system.
- Fast Multimedia Enhanced Modem** - Your PC becomes a full-time fax machine and you can easily link to the Internet. Direct connect a multimedia PC without a modem. Streamline offer!
- Fast Processor** - Intel Pentium 120MHz is a high performance processor providing exceptional performance. Faster than PC's 100MHz systems which are now old technology. For even more power we recommend our high performance P150+ which is identical in form as a P120 but with:
- 1000MHz Hard Disk** - because 1GB is an Enhanced IDE hard disk system with plenty of storage potential.
- Fast 64-bit Graphics** - The fastest graphics with advanced driver which allows you to use 3D to speed higher resolution colour output. From a 32-bit mode you can also use with Software MPEG, also a useful playback of MPEG files.
- Full-Feature Multimedia** - Fast Card speed CD-ROM drive with 2x for speed, 2x for audio, 2x for video, all are standard. Remember a fast CD drive will handle more files faster.
- Massive software bundle** - Microsoft Windows 95, Office 95, and more. The Microsoft Windows 95 software suite, Lotus, and 17" 14" Colour Printer.
- FREE! Colour Inkjet Printer** - For a limited period our system comes with a quality colour inkjet printer.

Options

- PC keyboard and 1 CD-ROM drive with 16MB RAM and 14" screen.
- £35.25 inc. VAT (£29.99 + VAT)

£1290.15
inc. VAT
(£1098)
+VAT

Free
Lexmark Colour Inkjet Printer
First 500 orders only

Free
Modem
B&W approved 14.4 V32bis Fax/Modem internet modem
A free modem will be included with the last 1000 orders. P150+ model comes with a 28.8k V.34 B modem.

01282 777 111 **TIME**

Lines Open: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 9am-5pm. Central House, Mutton Rd, Stonehouse, Basingstoke, Hants, RG12 7GJ.

SAVE UP TO £100 ON A HOSTESS TROLLEY AND SPEND MORE TIME WITH YOUR GUESTS.

If you're buying a Philips Hostess trolley here's a highly palatable offer. £100 off wood veneer models HL6240, HL6241, HL6242 and HL6243. £50 off model HL6232 and £25 off the HL6200.

This mouth watering offer runs throughout October and November 1996, only in participating stores. Hostess trolleys are available at all good department stores and electrical retailers.

Let's make things better.

PHILIPS

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

Edith Penrose

A firm believer

EDITH Penrose, the distinguished economist who has died aged 81, was best known for revolutionising the branch of economics known as the theory of the firm...

pointed to a post at the embassy, as special assistant to the ambassador, in 1944 the couple married and after the war went to John Hopkins University, Baltimore.

while her husband, approaching 65, retired to the UK. Here, Edith looked for a job. She applied to the Economics Faculty at Cambridge where the appointments committee, who had received the galley proofs of the book, were so impressed that they expected the interview to be a formality. In the end, however, her application was rejected.

In the field of oil economics, Penrose was the first person to discover the significance of transfer pricing and tax avoidance, and she was virtually the only economist to treat oil as an industry, rather than an esoteric branch of theory.

not become fully effective overnight. The growth process is therefore dynamically constrained. These ideas may not sound strange to people who have not studied economics, but for all those who have experienced the first year of a micro-economics course, they have a profoundly heretical implication.

After McCarthy, the family received a box of hate mail, including threats to burn their house

Cambridge's loss was Edith's gain, for she went on to have a rich career, first as a reader at the LSE, then as Dean of the Institut Européen d'Administration des Affaires at Fontainebleau, as professor and department head at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies, and numerous miscellaneous appointments, including governor of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research.



Penrose: lively and liberal from her second marriage, of whom one predeceased her.

Robin Morris

Will Norton writes: Edith Penrose was a great woman. She was intellectually courageous, unfailingly lively and liberal in the best sense of the word.

Edith Penrose's entry in The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics concluded that the total effect of Edith Penrose's work was the destruction of the neo-classical model of the firm.

Edith Titton Penrose, economist, born November 29, 1914; died October 11, 1996

Appreciation: Berthold Goldschmidt

Ovation for a master composer

Sir Simon Rattle writes:

I WILL never forget the sight or the emotion of Berthold Goldschmidt (obituary, October 18) on stage in the Berlin Philharmonie in 1987. The Berlin Festival had courageously decided to highlight works written by composers who had been driven out of Berlin during the Nazi period, and the directors were astonished to find that Berthold was still alive.

As you can imagine, the silence was palpable. In the evening, what was the public response to the performance of his music? It was an ovation so thunderous it seemed for a moment doubtful that the concert could continue.

But on the evening itself, Berthold was eventually forced to leave his seat and climb slowly and painfully with his walking stick down the stairs. On reaching the platform, he made a powerful symbolic gesture, dispelling any doubts that this was not a true man of the theatre, by throwing down his stick and walking to the podium unaided.

the first performance, and had substantially contributed to the orchestration. Our immediate friendship soon gave way to the feeling that here was a long-lost member of my family, with my children looking forward to his visits.

Musically, of course, he was a very powerful influence on me, one of our last direct links with the performing traditions of the 1910s and 1920s, and a man with an always radical intelligence. I had long known his famous 1959 Philharmonia performance of Mahler's 3rd (incredibly, the first time in the UK), but soon found that his insight covered all areas of music and the arts. He has left a treasure chest of important music behind.

It is as a man, though, that those of us close to him will miss him the most. His interest and engagement in everything and everybody around him made him youthful in age, with an almost bewildering degree of warmth and energy. Maybe it was his unusual combination of optimism and a sense of the absurd that buoyed him up. Whatever his attitude to life is well illustrated by his throwaway answer to a leading question: "Do you not feel bitter about your emigration to Germany?" "graciously trumped by 'You know, bitterness is only a matter of taste'."

Bernard Koeffe writes: The obituary marking the death of Berthold Goldschmidt printed over my name contained substantial additions which I did not write. These included serious errors, in particular the statement that his opera Beatrice Cenci was first heard in full in 1988 in a performance by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Simon Rattle. In fact the opera was given in that year in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, conducted by Odaline de la Martinez, and was made possible only through the generosity of Helen Lawrence, because no established organisation was willing to undertake it.

Bill Hooper

Percy Prune takes off!

THE personality of Pilot Officer Percy Prune was neatly summed up in a parody of a wartime poem, "So dumb, but so duffin!" Prune was the creation of cartoonist Bill Hooper, best remembered by his pen name, Raff, who has died aged 80.

ist, he kept his companions amused with cartoons — talking the name Raff from his pet dog. With some help in late 1940 Hooper put together an illustrated booklet, Forges-Me-Not for Figures about the lessons learned by pilots during the Battle of Britain.

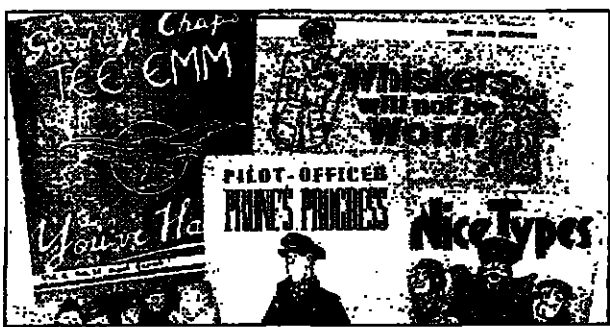
The booklet was seen by Anthony Armstrong, who was in charge of editing and producing an internal RAF magazine with the somewhat officious title of Training Memorandum. Armstrong rechristened the monthly in Morse code, calling it Tee Emm, and asked Hooper to add the amusing decorations — mainly the slightly smiling, face of Prune, who popped up through the 24 pages as a kind of cartoon compeer.

In an article in the first edition, Baling out or how to descend by parachute in a calm and collected fashion, Prune is seen descending by chute, but dangling upside down. In the same issue Prune, hands thrust deep into pockets, cap peak hiding his eyes, speaks for the first time the famous motto of the magazine: "Take Tee Emm regularly — prevents that Thinking Feeling!"

The gag was a pun on Bovril's popular advertising slogan. The Prune cartoons, originally unsigned, soon bore the small signature of W Hooper RAF. This was shortened to Raff for the publication of his first proper book. In the corner of the dust-jacket portrait of Prune appears the family crest. It is a shield embossed with a large hand, index finger pointing upwards balancing an outsized ring around the knuckle. According to the text within concerning Sir Percival de Prunne (1315-1370), this royal ring was a reward to commemorate the brave action of Beowulf Prun, who saved his men from drowning by keeping his forefinger firmly in a hole that would have otherwise flooded his galley. This came into existence the famous Irremovable Finger (Irremovable non movant) of the Prunes, together with their motto, Semper in armis. This was the birth of the cry of "Finger!", an RAF slogan, however, in spite of the obvious historical reference to the Luftwaffe, Hermann Goering.



Bill Hooper with Perry and, below, some of his RAF cartoons



After his demob, Hooper drew for a while for an Anglo-US training magazine, and in 1946 became perhaps the first cartoonist to draw, narrate and publish in a simple fashion a BBC TV series for children, The Star. He then worked for 12 years as a journalist on the Sunday Pictorial.

The comic actor, Derek Nimmo, introducing Hooper's book The Passing of Pilot Officer Prune (1978), writes: "Idiotically enough, I was a member of the RAF Benevolent Fund where he had a studio in which he worked until the end. Bill Hooper is survived by his son, John, a Guardian journalist.

William John (Raff) Hooper, cartoonist, born August 21, 1916; died October 14, 1996

Weekend Birthdays

John le Carré, aka David Cornwell, is 85 today. He is the son of a dodgy father and a survivor of a bootless and chaotic childhood who grew up to be a professional insider, at his best as a reporter. Such a pity, you felt through the great successes of the Smiley era, this ability to record being confined to environments mostly composed of filing-cabinets and sherry glasses. Why invent professional incomprensibility when any laconic few pens he wrote about, say, P.L.A. training, were far more fascinating? Money, one supposes.

Today's other birthdays: Prof Sir Robert Boyd, FRS, physicist and astronomer, 74; Eddie Daniels, jazz clarinetist, 55; Phil Davies, rugby player, 55; Michael Gambon, actor, 56; Sidonie Gosseens, harpist, 55; Bernard Hepton, actor, 57; Rosamund John, actress, 82; Carol Kidd, jazz singer, 61.

Tomorrow's birthdays: Art Buchwald, columnist, 71; Patrick Hughes, artist, 57; Laurence Dabry, former miners' leader, 72; Kathy Kirby, singer, 58; Eddie Macken, showjumper, 47; Judge Deirdre McKinney, 68; Emlid Marx, painter and designer, 54; Tom Petty, guitarist and singer, 43; Ian Ruskell, footballer, 35; Martin Taylor, jazz guitarist, composer, 40; Timothy West, actor, 62.

Death Notices

GOLDSCHMIDT, Berthold, on 17th October, peacefully in his sleep at home, aged 81, in accordance with his wishes the cremation will be private. Please no flowers or cards. A memorial concert will also take place in 1997 to celebrate his life and the music.

MEMORIAL SERVICES: Dr Kevin A memorial celebration for the life of Dr Kevin Keoghane will be held at St George's Roman Catholic Central, Southwark on Friday, 8 November at 11.00am. Friends and colleagues will be welcome and those wishing to attend should, if they have not already done so, contact Mrs J S Hall, The Mullards Foundation, 28 Bedford Square, London WC1R 3EJ (0171 637 0561).

Birthdays

MR. BLESSEY, Happy Birthday. Thinking of you always xxx. (To place your announcement telephone 0171 713 4627, Fax 0171 713 4128)

Face to Faith

Time to throw away the comfort cushion of dogma

Peter Thompson

THEOLOGY in the 20th century can be characterised by one, rare, unexpected emotional response: it is exciting. It stirs the heart. In retrospect, it will be seen as one of the most daring, fertile and creative moments in the history of modern thought, a time pregnant with all the possibilities of new birth and new life.

God's Kingdom of Love, been so deaf to the thundering prophetic challenges thrown down by 20th century theologians around the globe. It was Karl Barth who belatedly, "Religion is the enemy of faith." Bonhoeffer, a friend of the Bishop of Chichester, writing from his prison cell, said it is not our task to make people more Christian, but more truly human. He said that in a world come of age we should be seeking the sacred in the secular, and moving towards a religionless Christianity. The role of the Church

is to be the servant to the community. The cry of the liberation theologians is that the Gospel demands a preferential option for the poor, and reacts with prophetic clout at the dismal efforts of our Church towards the poor and marginalised in the global village. Women have entered the fray, and have affirmed their rights as persons, in a Church stunted and deformed by its inbred patriarchy and misogyny. The banners are now held high proclaiming, God is Green; God is Black; God is Red.

Whether it is the environment, or the issue of race, God is alive and active in the ongoing establishment of the Kingdom of Love, and who can stop this journey of faith?

Our Church as an institution, however, is on the back foot. It seems defensive and fearful lest it betrays the past as it faces the challenges and passions of the present. In a constant state of turmoil, our Church seeks solace in its traditions and in a suspicion of things new. In its attempt to hold fast to the rich heritage of one proud, provincial and often patronising past, our Church, of whatever persuasion or denomination, shows all the signs of tension that accompany such prophetic outbursts of faith of 20th century theology. How could it be otherwise?

Noting recent difficulties, whether it be in our response to women clergy, or to the reality of same-sex partners, sug-

gests that perhaps we need to look elsewhere than our doctrinal propositions and authority structures for a clearer vision of the way forward.

It is my contention that the seeming irrelevance of our Church, especially amongst the young, has less to do with doctrinal propositions and authority structures than with our bona fides; are we in good faith? It is a matter concerning action not theory. To be in good faith means showing forth in our lives, in our love for one another, that God is at work in the world, bringing about the Kingdom of Love on earth. In this we are his co-workers. This is not about doctrinal purity or abstract theological concepts, but about a job to be done: to breed and nurture Love, Justice and Goodwill amongst all. It has a political ring to it, and so it should, for it has its roots deeply set in a commitment to the living presence of God.

It is about compassion, not judgement. It is about love, not law. Is this the focus of our Church? But, busy beyond our wildest dreams, our Church pursues its own agenda for survival, laden with an impossible administrative task, not only to pay its way on a day-to-day basis, but having to meet the ever increasing costs of maintaining a fabric that often does not meet the needs of the moment, yet remains part of a treasured past.

Frustrated and often worn-out, thousands of faithful clergy and laity struggle to meet their people's needs. Perhaps we should think again about our need for partnership — with each other as Christians, and with society at large.

There is almost a sigh of relief amongst many in the Church at the liberation of secularisation, a world come of age that refuses to bow down to an authority structure. Not that this new world of secular-

isation has all the answers and few would claim it has. But there is at least an air of optimism as answers are sought through debate and dialogue.

Why then do we need to opt for the cultic club and the comfort cushion of dogmatic certainty, safety and security? Isn't this a relic of a world long past? It has been tried and tested by our children, and found wanting. Yet what we need above all is the refreshing breath and vital wholesomeness of the young.

That we are at a fork in the road few would dispute, yet the unmarked and untested dirt track of 20th century theology is a trail worth blazing in this new world of the global village. It might prove a rugged path, but by God, what an exciting journey of faith! We might even find our children at the end of it.

Peter Thompson is a curate at St Luke's, Holloway, north London.

Advertisement for Bradford & Bingley financial services. Text: 'We're FREE TO OFFER THE BEST PENSION FOR YOU BECAUSE WE DON'T HAVE ONE TO SELL'. Includes contact information: CALL 0800 57 0800. For more information or to make an appointment with one of our independent financial advisers and quote code GU1810. (Lines are open 9.00am-8.30pm Monday-Friday, 10.00am-6.00pm Weekends). Bradford & Bingley Building Society is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority for Investment Business.

More rounds in the big shoot-out

Questions on the House

The minors that matter
But Sir James can't collect

THESE SEEM LIKE good times for political outsiders. In Austria last weekend, Jörg Haider's Freedom Party took a record 28 per cent of the vote on an anti-establishment, anti-Europe, anti-immigrant platform...

In many respects, 1990s Britain would seem a prime target for such a challenge. Our political institutions are conspicuously more elitist and visibly less reformed than those of almost any other established democratic society...

All the pre-conditions exist. In other words, for an effective populist assault on British political life. Yet, so far at least, it has not taken place. The only even briefly successful new party of modern times, the SDP, lasted for less than a decade.

This ought to make Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party the hottest political ticket in town. On the surface, it appears to fit the bill for the long-awaited British populist party — well-financed, anti-establishment and nationalist. It even has a programme consisting exclusively of a single populist demand — the holding of a referendum.

The Bill v Bob show

Dole's ethical punch missed its target

IT WAS A DEBATE doomed not to inspire. Bill Clinton's best policy as he neared the end of the contest was to act presidential, shrug off personal attacks and avoid physical contact. Bob Dole's only chance was to hit a devastating weak spot in his opponent.

The last few days had seen the emergence of a really scandalous issue — nothing to do with sex or travel agencies or FBI files at all — with which Mr Dole could have done more. His elliptical reference to "campaign contributions coming in from Indonesia or other foreign countries" can barely have registered on the viewing audience.

However often we are warned about the unpredictable effect of the unpredictable, it is very hard to resist the obvious conclusion that Mr Clinton is going to win.

The polls do contain one contrary indication. When asked which candidate has more integrity and character, voters have preferred Mr Dole by a majority of three to one.

I AM beginning to find the Snowdrop Campaign increasingly distasteful. ("We will not compromise", October 17). As a parent whose only child was run down and killed by a speeding motor vehicle...

spokespersons that their members are safe, sane and law-abiding? It raises the question as to who these gun-club members are — and how many there will be...

MEMBERS of gun clubs are a motley assemblage, ranging from purist marksmen from the tournament scene through to the occasional member who simply enjoys handling firearms.

USE and own a handgun. It is a reproduction of an antique arm used during the American Civil War. It uses no powder, then ball, then a cap in order for it to be fired.

IN my teens I was given an air pistol, not a very dangerous weapon but still a machine designed to propel a piece of lead into another person or another animal.

WILL the proposed controls include the 130,000 plus guns legally held throughout the Unionist population in Northern Ireland, mainly licensed by the old Unionist-dominated Stormont government?

record as saying, just before last Christmas, that "these weapons would be used to resist change."

THE Territorial Army TV advertising campaign poses the question: "How best might we surprise and kill all the sleeping inhabitants of your camp?"

I AM in complete agreement with your campaign to remove powerful handguns from our society. But arguments what next? Catapults and spud guns? Let's be realistic.

YOUR report of the Willetts affair resulted in my moving a resolution on October 16 (Minister called to account on Hamilton scandal, October 16). This was narrowly based and merely addressed the question of whether he used improper influence on the committee.

Goodbye to the World Service

YOU are right (Leader, October 16) to be suspicious of the "messy compromise" reached by the Joint Foreign Office/BBC working party on the future of the BBC World Service.

It is all too obvious that the so-called safeguards are of little or no value, and that the World Service will be irreparably damaged. So its news department is to become "a dedicated World Service news unit within the domestic BBC News Directorate".

What good are the "extensive powers" of World Service Commissioners to specify the programmes they want if the experts who have been producing these programmes so successfully have been disbanded and so are no longer available?

ANOTHER MANIFESTO
As the election approaches, our series Another Manifesto will continue to let readers inject constructive ideas into political debate.

WE have it on good authority that the royal family is considering the monarchy's future. The people should also consider it. The reform of the monarchy, or its possible replacement with a presidency, can never be included in the manifesto of a party seeking to form a government.

THE proposal: a four-day week. The argument: spreads work over a greater number of people (French research shows it could create over 1 million jobs); allows more free time for friends and family, relaxation, leisure and learning; reduces social costs of stress-related illnesses and anti-social behaviour; can be done without significant cuts in earnings.

THREE thoughts. First, in order to improve people's perception of their own sense of responsibility, anyone wishing to own a cat, dog, gerbil, etc, should take a competence test in animal welfare. If successful, they should gain a licence, to be presented at any pet shop, kennel, etc.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

THE proposal: a four-day week. The argument: spreads work over a greater number of people (French research shows it could create over 1 million jobs); allows more free time for friends and family, relaxation, leisure and learning; reduces social costs of stress-related illnesses and anti-social behaviour; can be done without significant cuts in earnings.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

Driven mad by sign language

SINCE December 1995, when the Department of Transport relaxed the type of premises that could be sign-posted on motorways and trunk roads, increasing numbers of "tourist facility" signs have appeared.

Such signs add to roadside clutter and, through their fixing on the supports holding road signs, distract motorists by competing with essential information.

Over age
THE director of Age Concern London (Letters, October 16) states that "it is unenviable to tell older people that their lives are worth less than everyone else's".

THE proposal: a four-day week. The argument: spreads work over a greater number of people (French research shows it could create over 1 million jobs); allows more free time for friends and family, relaxation, leisure and learning; reduces social costs of stress-related illnesses and anti-social behaviour; can be done without significant cuts in earnings.

The littler week, and other big ideas

ANOTHER MANIFESTO

As the election approaches, our series Another Manifesto will continue to let readers inject constructive ideas into political debate.

WE have it on good authority that the royal family is considering the monarchy's future. The people should also consider it. The reform of the monarchy, or its possible replacement with a presidency, can never be included in the manifesto of a party seeking to form a government.

THE proposal: a four-day week. The argument: spreads work over a greater number of people (French research shows it could create over 1 million jobs); allows more free time for friends and family, relaxation, leisure and learning; reduces social costs of stress-related illnesses and anti-social behaviour; can be done without significant cuts in earnings.

THREE thoughts. First, in order to improve people's perception of their own sense of responsibility, anyone wishing to own a cat, dog, gerbil, etc, should take a competence test in animal welfare. If successful, they should gain a licence, to be presented at any pet shop, kennel, etc.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

THE proposal: a four-day week. The argument: spreads work over a greater number of people (French research shows it could create over 1 million jobs); allows more free time for friends and family, relaxation, leisure and learning; reduces social costs of stress-related illnesses and anti-social behaviour; can be done without significant cuts in earnings.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

the authority of Parliament, or a free vote, to set up a People's Commission on the Constitution. This will take representations from any UK individual or body.

If the Queen dies before the Commission has made its final report, the heir to the throne should carry out the monarch's present constitutional duties as if he were the first president.

THREE thoughts. First, in order to improve people's perception of their own sense of responsibility, anyone wishing to own a cat, dog, gerbil, etc, should take a competence test in animal welfare. If successful, they should gain a licence, to be presented at any pet shop, kennel, etc.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

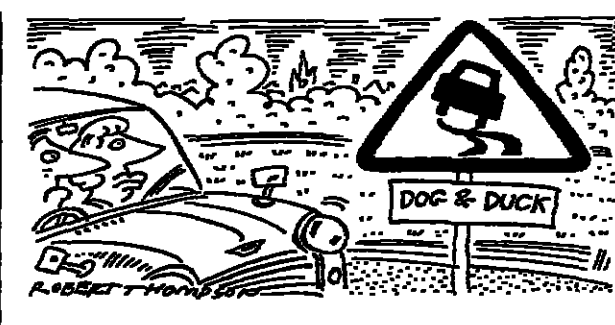
THE proposal: a four-day week. The argument: spreads work over a greater number of people (French research shows it could create over 1 million jobs); allows more free time for friends and family, relaxation, leisure and learning; reduces social costs of stress-related illnesses and anti-social behaviour; can be done without significant cuts in earnings.

THREE thoughts. First, in order to improve people's perception of their own sense of responsibility, anyone wishing to own a cat, dog, gerbil, etc, should take a competence test in animal welfare. If successful, they should gain a licence, to be presented at any pet shop, kennel, etc.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

THE proposal: a four-day week. The argument: spreads work over a greater number of people (French research shows it could create over 1 million jobs); allows more free time for friends and family, relaxation, leisure and learning; reduces social costs of stress-related illnesses and anti-social behaviour; can be done without significant cuts in earnings.

THAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.



Driven mad by sign language

SINCE December 1995, when the Department of Transport relaxed the type of premises that could be sign-posted on motorways and trunk roads, increasing numbers of "tourist facility" signs have appeared.

Such signs add to roadside clutter and, through their fixing on the supports holding road signs, distract motorists by competing with essential information.

Over age
THE director of Age Concern London (Letters, October 16) states that "it is unenviable to tell older people that their lives are worth less than everyone else's".

A poor review

YOU describe me as a "left-wing" poverty expert (Firms' should curb top pay to aid low-waged, October 12). My political views have nothing to do with my professional social-science assignment to serve on the Channel 4 Poverty Commission.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Disparagement inflicts your whole summary. It is one thing to call attention to disagreements between individual members of a public inquiry in the process of reaching a unanimous report.

Martin Kettle



SIR James Goldsmith is never knowingly understated, so it came as no surprise this week that he should claim, immodestly as ever, that no party conference has ever faced a more fundamentally important issue than the one which his Referendum Party will debate today at Brighton.

Along with the late Kim II Sung, Sir James shares a touching belief in the effectiveness of full-page adverts in the national press as a means of advancing his cause. His characteristically incautious assessment of the historic significance of his Brighton rally appeared in one of them this week. I suppose it was intended to make one think. If so, the thoughts

RIP the RP: the party will soon be over

It inspires are probably not those he would wish. No conference has ever been more preposterously oversold than the one which starts and ends in Brighton this weekend. Sir James and his band of brothers invite us to treat Brighton like Agincourt and think ourselves secured we are not there. But the only important issue being decided at Brighton this weekend is which dinner invitation to accept. And the only party that matters is Lord McAlpine's.

I simply do not understand why anyone except Taki takes the Referendum Party so seriously. Sir they do. Given Tony MPs' flinch at the very thought of it. They talk airily about Goldsmith taking 2 per cent of the vote in every constituency. They jabber nervously that he can lose the Tories the election. They will do any deal to be passed over when Sir James smites the unbelievers. Lord Archer, the author of this newspaper's canard, still seems to believe in it, judging by his recent interviews. Sir James, unsurprisingly, does nothing to discourage him.

But the claim is simply unsupportable. It is of course true that any vote for Goldsmith is a lost vote for someone else. That, though, is as far as it goes. British political history is littered with the corpses of single issue parties led by would-be national saviours. All of them believed that they could break the system, but in the end it was the system that broke them. What the Natural Law Party was to the 1992 general election — 0.2 per cent of the national vote and a landslide of lost deposits — the Referendum Party will be to the election of 1997.

There is no great mystery about this. It all comes down to numbers — and Sir James's aren't big enough. The polling organisation MORF calculates that in all its quota sample surveys conducted between July and September this year it found 52 Referendum Party supporters out of a total of 17,188 voters — or less than 0.4 per cent of the total. True, RP support is concentrated among old, male, middle-class ex-Tory voters living in the south of England (and is thus liable to have a greater effect among such voters), but their chief characteristic is that they are so rare. Moreover and crucially, as election day nears they are likely to be squeezed even further by the major parties. Lord Archer's so-called research — which was funded by a leading Goldsmith ally, Christopher Monkton — has been swallowed without a health warning. Sir James's candidates may take enough votes to make the difference in a handful of seats.

clean the streets and public areas of gum.

THIRD, a way to combat reckless social behaviour. A Social Behaviour Court should be set up. Anyone who causes a breach of the peace (eg a noisy neighbour) should be brought before it, with community-service sentences. Dennis E Franklin, 236 The Crescent, Sandgate, Folkestone, Kent CT20 3EE.

WHAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

WHAT is needed is a tax on packaging. The more unnecessary the packaging, the higher the tax; the more compostable the material, the lower the tax.

A Country Diary

MACHYNLETH: One of the most endearing features of life in small country towns is surely the existence of local societies for the study of history, archaeology and natural history, horticulture and other outdoor interests. Some of these clubs have not lasted. Others are remarkable for their long duration.

Traces of defunct ones can be found in the early files of newspapers — especially valuable for this part of the world, being a treasury of information — called Byegones Relating To Wales And The Border Counties, published long ago but still available in reference libraries. It takes us back to the days when, to get to the field frolics of their local society, people were conveyed in wagonettes, or they went on horseback, or they simply walked, maybe for miles. I am moved to these thoughts because this week one of our local natural history societies is celebrating

its 50th birthday. Faithfully for half a century the Montgomeryshire Field Society has held its AGM, elected its officers, arranged its programme of meetings (which have had a remarkably good attendance record) and produced its annual report telling us what creatures have been sighted, what wildflowers found and what the weather was like. As is inevitable these days, the society has often been involved in struggles for conservation, some being won, some lost. And last year its botanical records were seminal in the production of an excellent flora of Montgomeryshire. This week we wonder whether, 50 years from now, the Montgomeryshire Field Society will be celebrating its centenary? For this the auguries are very good. It is a society, the distinguished history of another Montgomeryshire institution, the Powysland Club, the oldest archaeological society in Britain: its records go back to its foundation in 1867.

WILLIAM CONDRY

its 50th birthday. Faithfully for half a century the Montgomeryshire Field Society has held its AGM, elected its officers, arranged its programme of meetings (which have had a remarkably good attendance record) and produced its annual report telling us what creatures have been sighted, what wildflowers found and what the weather was like. As is inevitable these days, the society has often been involved in struggles for conservation, some being won, some lost. And last year its botanical records were seminal in the production of an excellent flora of Montgomeryshire. This week we wonder whether, 50 years from now, the Montgomeryshire Field Society will be celebrating its centenary? For this the auguries are very good. It is a society, the distinguished history of another Montgomeryshire institution, the Powysland Club, the oldest archaeological society in Britain: its records go back to its foundation in 1867.

Wanted to take his case to the courts it was deemed illegal for him to do so. The law was changed by Parliament to make it possible. Diane Blood wishes to have her dead husband's child by artificial insemination and it has been deemed illegal for her to do so. When will Parliament change the law to make her wish possible?

How long must we tolerate one rule for MPs and a different rule for the rest of us? Bill Mervin is Parliamentary Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union, Transport House, Palace Street, London SW1E 5JD.

When will Parliament change the law to make her wish possible? How long must we tolerate one rule for MPs and a different rule for the rest of us? Bill Mervin is Parliamentary Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union, Transport House, Palace Street, London SW1E 5JD.

When will Parliament change the law to make her wish possible? How long must we tolerate one rule for MPs and a different rule for the rest of us? Bill Mervin is Parliamentary Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union, Transport House, Palace Street, London SW1E 5JD.

When will Parliament change the law to make her wish possible? How long must we tolerate one rule for MPs and a different rule for the rest of us? Bill Mervin is Parliamentary Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union, Transport House, Palace Street, London SW1E 5JD.

When will Parliament change the law to make her wish possible? How long must we tolerate one rule for MPs and a different rule for the rest of us? Bill Mervin is Parliamentary Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union, Transport House, Palace Street, London SW1E 5JD.

When will Parliament change the law to make her wish possible? How long must we tolerate one rule for MPs and a different rule for the rest of us? Bill Mervin is Parliamentary Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union, Transport House, Palace Street, London SW1E 5JD.

When will Parliament change the law to make her wish possible? How long must we tolerate one rule for MPs and a different rule for the rest of us? Bill Mervin is Parliamentary Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union, Transport House, Palace Street, London SW1E 5JD.

Keep a shift of

How Eas won and

David Hears

F

Keep a shift of

commentary Martin Woolacott

How the East was won - and lost

It was to be the dawn of a new age. The collapse of Communism in the USSR opened huge markets for wonderful, energising Western capitalism. But it hasn't happened like that - and, David Hearst believes, it probably never will

FLYING east to arrive in the habitual gloom of a landing at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport, the British Airways flight from London was packed with wary travellers. It was December 1991, the last days of Mikhail Gorbachev and the Soviet Union. The Red Flag still flew over the Kremlin - but it only needed the merest of political events, a secret meeting between the presidents of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, for the symbol of the great empire's authority to come slithering down.

Sensing the moment, the plenitude of westerners was full of nervous anticipation. My neighbour was a Belgian businessman who boasted to his colleague that the hangar that loomed large as the plane thumped its way towards the end of the runway was "theirs". They had bought the whole thing, or so they thought. Beside him was a German who was buying up Orders of Lenin or the Red Banner of Labour from cash-starved war veterans; and beside him was a man who called himself "a missionary from the Lord".

They were missionaries for one but themselves. The democratic values they thought they were importing to Russia have been blown away, and the result is the sort of historic but fundamentally dangerous medieval feud that we have seen this week. Watching the play of Ivan the Terrible is indeed a good way for the ousted security chief Alexander Lebed to begin his first days in the political wilderness.

Western embassies in Moscow, susceptible to the claim that things have not turned out under Boris Yeltsin quite the way they had intended, have erected a temporary wooden palisade around their rather exposed positions. It consists of three arguments. Argument Number One: After 75 years of communism in which Russia was practically a militarised state, it would be folly to expect the transition period to go smoothly or quickly. It took 300 years to create the English lawn. There's no army with the Defence Number Two: Right or wrong, democratic or no, there was no practical

alternative to supporting Boris Yeltsin, who, whatever else he has done, has submitted himself twice to popular vote and won both times fairly. Who else was there? Grigori Yavlinski, the young and popular liberal economist, but as yet nowhere near power. Governments have to deal with heads of states. Bad Boris was the "least worst" choice.

Plea-bargain Number Three: Let us not overestimate the West's influence on internal Russian politics. It is here that the fence has a gaping hole in it. Over the last five years, Russia has opened the door on the West almost painfully wide. The Western governments had an unexpectedly large amount of day-to-day influence on the governance of Russia. They decided when to turn on the financial taps to prop up the state budget, when to keep quiet (the CIA is very well informed about the murky events around the storming of the White House, the seat of a parliamentary rebellion in 1993) and when to turn up in person at Yeltsin's sick bed and declare him fighting fit.

US Vice-President Al Gore, after meeting Yeltsin in a sanatorium, said on July 17: "He looks very good to me. He seems to be in good health. He was relaxed, smiling." Note the date. According to his cardiologists, including the US heart surgeon Michael DeBakey, he had had a heart attack days before. The German

Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, performed a similar political operation for Mr Yeltsin by flying to his hunting lodge and helping the president "shoot 40 ducks and one wild boar". How, one is tempted to ask? This was not international but public relations. Foreign statesmen were performing a task better suited to the presidential press service. They were adding credibility to a lie they were in all probability

privy to. This does not go unnoticed by the Russian people, who are not having a good time of it, however much one tries to talk up the arrival of the free market and big-business capital in Moscow and St Petersburg. Advocates of the "trickle-down theory" should ask themselves how much of this newly created wealth has trickled down to within 100 kilometres of Moscow, St Petersburg, Nizhni Novgorod, Yekaterinburg, and Vladivostok - and to whom. The successive election results on both sides of the left-right divide, politically and geographically, and there is no reason to assume that with the arrival of Lebed, the political division between areas where new wealth has been created and those areas still in the pit of stagnation has gone.

In late 1991 and early 1992, the enthusiasm of the planload of free-market missionaries was matched only by the idealism and naivety of their Russian hosts. Their belief in what the future held in store, how wealth would instantly and painlessly flow into Russia on a great tide of Western

investment, was painful to witness. I remember an old man staggering drunk up to the kiosk where I stopped to buy beer in a village outside Moscow. The sight of foreigners travelling freely outside Moscow was still new. Even the word "foreigner" in Russian had the same ponderous resonance that it had in Britain 40 years ago in the days when Benidorm was a fishing village and "wogs" were still deemed to start in Calais.

The man was drunk, and the sight of a battered Volvo produced an exaggerated effect on him: "Marvellous, these English cars. You know we were told for so long how stupid your Queen was, and how clever our Central Committee was. But you know we were the fools all along." That was the mood of the times. Self-abasement, rejection of Russia's past, even its Cyrillic script in favour of English-language advertisements. It is here that nationalism was born as a creed that would take over from communism.

This was a revolution, not a reform, and revolutionaries are sensitive to symbols. Moscow was littered with the icons of the new free-market messiah. Giant Coca-Cola cans were placed along Gorky Street, Moscow's main thoroughfare, which was renamed Tverskaya. All the names of the streets were changed, and for a time one could tell where they were on the Metro. The stop

that had been known for 40 years as Prospect Marx suddenly became Hunter's Row from the time hunters used to sell their fowl outside the Bolshoi, but no one had then the foggiest idea what it meant. McDonald's restaurant chain opened right opposite Pushkin's statue, and when another branch opened right next to Pushkin's house in the Arbat, Boris Yeltsin himself came to open it.

The free market has arrived, but the belief that the West would help Russia has gone. With it has also died any faith that democratic values are the right ones for crisis-ridden Russia today. Lebed describes himself as "half a democrat", and it can only be an outside chance that the strong hand that Russia's battered working class are crying out for will be a fair and paternalistic one.

This cynicism is as much a reaction to Western policy as it is to continued industrial decline. It was the West which argued in the worst moments of the Yeltsin years that the ends justified the means, and it has been argued consistently.

Yes, the way Yeltsin dealt with a parliamentary revolt in October 1993 was clumsy and bloody, but it had to be done, for the greater good of keeping the assorted communists and fascists holed up in the building out of power. Yes, it is politically harmful virtually to exclude Russia's middle ground of opinion from state television, in an effort to persuade the people that it's a choice between the

Whites and the Reds, but everything is excused in the aim of keeping Gennady Zyuganov, leader of a broad alliance of communists and nationalists, out of power. Yes, more people died in Chechnya than at any time since Afghanistan War, but Russia is still allowed to become a member of Council of Europe. We protest about the tactics used, but not too loudly. Yes, the collapse of the state and the loss of law and order is harmful, but it's just

studied and visited by many of the most distinguished reformers, political thinkers and leaders in the European world. Those visitors came to wonder at the early New Zealand welfare state, and at a broad democracy that included votes for women long before that was achieved elsewhere. This earlier welfare state was re-built and extended in the late 30s. Having pioneered one political way, New Zealanders felt they could pioneer another. A small country's confidence in its capacity to go first, since after all it had done so once before, helped the New Right thrusters to get their way.

In the process much has been lost. The most basic loss has been that New Zealand, which had always had a strong state, now has a weaker one. As the left-wing political scientist Jane Kelsey has pointed out in her powerful book on the New Zealand experiment, Economic Fundamentalism, now neither the political right nor the left has the same possibilities of imposing its will as before. Not all of what has been done is irreversible. But it would be uphill work. And a weaker ruling institution has to attempt to meet public expectations which, even if subverted by ideas about the irrelevance or incompetence of government, still, actually, expect governments to set things to rights. New Zealand, which is a lucky country with a small population, may be able to manage this contradiction better than other nations. It could also come to be seen as a marker in the process in which power in the world has not so much been transferred as dissipated.

Consigned to history... Lenin out, McDonald's in. But for the Russian economy, where's the beef?

PHOTOGRAPH BY MINDAUGAS KULIN



Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, performed a similar political operation for Mr Yeltsin by flying to his hunting lodge and helping the president "shoot 40 ducks and one wild boar". How, one is tempted to ask? This was not international but public relations. Foreign statesmen were performing a task better suited to the presidential press service. They were adding credibility to a lie they were in all probability



that had been known for 40 years as Prospect Marx suddenly became Hunter's Row from the time hunters used to sell their fowl outside the Bolshoi, but no one had then the foggiest idea what it meant. McDonald's restaurant chain opened right opposite Pushkin's statue, and when another branch opened right next to Pushkin's house in the Arbat, Boris Yeltsin himself came to open it.

Keep any eye on this shift of power

Commentary
Martin Woollacott

In New Zealand

ELECTIONS in Anglo-Saxon countries have taken a strange turn recently. Such events as the virtual disappearance of a major party, as in Canada, huge landslides for the right, as in the American congressional elections, and the expulsion from office of left parties for pursuing right-wing policies, as in Australia and New Zealand, suggest a new volatility.

spectrum there are voices calling for a return to the systemically interventionist social order of the past, but support for this is limited.

The political scene is dominated by the debate over how the social damage done by New Right measures can be alleviated without attempting to reverse most of the changes that were made. Whether a reconciliation of this kind between the new ruthless economics and the old social values is possible must be doubtful, but it is the big question of the next few years in all these countries. This is what accounts for the evasiveness of Tony Blair and the mangle policy-thefts of Bill Clinton. The New Right message that government is not good at doing a whole range of things that it used to attempt has seeped into the collective mind, producing the spectacle of people voting for governments to apply policies that they do not trust them to execute. Meanwhile, this greater volatility has offered further opportunity for some groups, particularly ethnic minorities, to escape from the larger coalitions in which they were players to become more free wheeling and autonomous actors. This overlap between New Right changes and the multi-cultural, sexual, gender, and green revolutions is one of

the most interesting developments, since it puzzles people on both sides of the left-right divide. Some, like Michael Lind in America, argue that it has become a device for distracting attention from class conflict. Others see genuine liberation.

New Zealand's recent election offers an example of how difficult it is to cast politics back to a time before the New Right. New Zealanders voted against the governments, first Labour and then National, which ruled them from 1984, because those governments re-made the country in the New Right mould without reference to an electorate which had not wanted or discussed such changes. They also voted for a change to proportional representation, again as a protest, moving the goalposts on the politicians just as the politicians had moved the goalposts on them. The results of the first election under a system whose advocates claimed would give voters more control over the kind of governments they got are, on the surface, bizarre. The country's future appears to have been handed over to its most unpredictable politician, leading a party, New Zealand First, which secured only a fragment of the non-Maori vote and which is, according to David Lange, a former Labour prime minister,

not a real party at all. However, Winston Peters is not as powerful as he looks. New Zealanders would punish him at the next election if he made unreasonable demands on the senior partner in a coalition, whether Labour or National, and they would punish any party which gave in to such demands.

The sudden liberation of Maoris from their long connection with the Labour Party, however, is one of those shifts to greater autonomy for minorities already mentioned. It will probably prove permanent. Away from the Winston Peters drama, what the New Zealand election showed is of interest to all the developed English-speaking democracies. A majority voted for parties which do not wish and have not

expected some improvements in social policy, whether a Labour or a National coalition takes power. But the question of how far such improvements can go without triggering a counter attack is unanswered.

The contradiction is a critical one. The majority of voters do not want, or believe possible, a reversal of the fundamental changes that have been made, changes which enhanced the power of business, battered the unions, widened the income gap, and scaled down the powers and reach of the state. But they do want the unpleasant social effects tidied up by this same diminished state, an entity which must now assess every move in terms of the signal it sends to "global business".

The apostles of the New Right creed have so effectively sold to New Zealanders the notion that the country is now the favourite son of international capital that almost everybody has been influenced by it. All

promised to reverse the changes of the last 12 years but only, to one degree or another, to soften their social impact. The two parties which did promise such reversals, the Alliance, which wants a thoroughgoing restoration of the welfare state and the buying back of some solid-off state assets, and New Zealand First, which has a similar but more dilute policy on some benefits and on assets like the state forests, did not do very well. The attitude of New Zealand voters seems to be that what's done is done, and that what has been lost to business, or sold off to for-

ever, is probably lost for ever.

The pride of New Zealanders is a curious factor here. The historian Keith Sinclair recalled in one of his essays that "in 1900, New Zealand, with a population of less than 800,000, was nevertheless a great country. With some of the Australian colonies, it stood for something of central importance for humanity, as was widely recognised. It was

studied and visited by many of the most distinguished reformers, political thinkers and leaders in the European world. Those visitors came to wonder at the early New Zealand welfare state, and at a broad democracy that included votes for women long before that was achieved elsewhere. This earlier welfare state was re-built and extended in the late 30s. Having pioneered one political way, New Zealanders felt they could pioneer another. A small country's confidence in its capacity to go first, since after all it had done so once before, helped the New Right thrusters to get their way.

In the process much has been lost. The most basic loss has been that New Zealand, which had always had a strong state, now has a weaker one. As the left-wing political scientist Jane Kelsey has pointed out in her powerful book on the New Zealand experiment, Economic Fundamentalism, now neither the political right nor the left has the same possibilities of imposing its will as before. Not all of what has been done is irreversible. But it would be uphill work. And a weaker ruling institution has to attempt to meet public expectations which, even if subverted by ideas about the irrelevance or incompetence of government, still, actually, expect governments to set things to rights. New Zealand, which is a lucky country with a small population, may be able to manage this contradiction better than other nations. It could also come to be seen as a marker in the process in which power in the world has not so much been transferred as dissipated.

'The West argued in the worst moments of the Yeltsin years that the ends justified the means'

a stage many early capitalist states go through. That argument was made by an American ambassador in Moscow. In the light of the efforts the FBI has made to highlight the dangers of Russian international crime, it is an ironic one.

Political pluralism, the rule of law, the distribution of power, fair elections, an independent media or free access to nationwide television in an election period - all of these principles have been quietly forgotten about in the cause of the Greater Good.

The prism through which Russians see the West and interpret its intentions has turned. It takes no great depth of imagination to see how the patriotically minded might interpret the expansion of Nato as a threat. During perestroika, Mikhail Gorbachev sold nuclear-arms reduction at home as an element of the "new political thinking" that was overtaking the old cold-war partners.

Where is the "new political thinking" in Nato's expansion east? Nato itself continues to be a military-led and US-dominated alliance. All Russian attempts to form a new European-based security structure have so far come to nothing. It is simply a non-starter. Russia is told, it is surprising that Russian military strategists, faced with a weakened conventional defence, should ask themselves why Russia should destroy its best land-based multiple-warhead missiles, when America intends to restart the race by developing a new anti-ballistic missile defence system?

The military tables have turned. It was once the West whose reliance on the nuclear shield was justified by the overwhelming number of Soviet tanks facing them. The same argument is now being used by Russia in reverse.

The missionaries have long since flown home. The quick bucks have been made, and what Russian industry needs is investors, not asset-strippers. It is clear that whoever becomes the next president of Russia, the basis for a non-democratic, authoritarian regime has already been laid.

The jury is out about how the next president of Russia will behave internationally. It was clearly not our intention to create an unstable Russia, playing the role in Europe of the dirty neighbour at the bottom of the garden who never cuts his grass. This is, after all, the old Cynic's age. But the question remains of the last five years of intense Western effort: did we win the East or are we just about to lose it?

THIS WEEK'S ESSAYIST, David Hearst, has been the Guardian's Moscow correspondent since March 1992. Hearst, aged 41, worked at the Scotsman before joining the Guardian as a home news reporter in 1984. He has been Northern Ireland Correspondent, and has reported from Yugoslavia and Kurdistan.

Advertisement

SHERBORNE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
DORSET DT9 3QN

SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications are invited for the following Awards

General Awards
Five scholarships and two Exhibitions for candidates under 14 on 1st September following the examination, which is held in late January at the candidate's school. Short-listed candidates will be interviewed at Sherborne.

Sixth Form
One Major and one Minor Sixth Form Scholarship are offered each year. Candidates are required to take papers and attend an interview at Sherborne on 18th & 19th November.

Art Awards
One award of up to half current fees. Candidates should be under the age of 14 on the 1st September following the examination. Candidates present a portfolio and do some practical work at Sherborne.

Music Awards
Awards of up to one-half current fees, with free tuition in two instruments. Music Exhibitions offering free tuition in two instruments. For the Music Awards there is no age limit. Auditions are held in February. Further particulars may be obtained from the Director of Music.
Telephone 01935 815460

For all Scholarships, the maximum award on grounds of talent is one half of the fees. However, it is possible for this to be increased by a bursary, on grounds of need, in some cases.

For details contact The Registrar 01935 812245
URL <http://www.compulink.co.uk/~ssg/>

The school is a charitable Trust for the purpose of educating girls No. 307427

Turbulence for Tupolev as Russian flag-carrier buys from Boeing

Industry needs engine

David Hearst in Moscow

THE industrial equivalent of freezing fog has enveloped Russia's airports and its aircraft industry. Russia needs to modernise some 1,600 aircraft, but its factories are idle, crippled through shortage of cash. The state coffers are empty and the jobs of 750,000 aircraft workers and at least as many again in ancillary industries — a labour force three times the size of Boeing, McDonnell Douglas and Airbus Industries put together — are in the balance.

Hardly surprising then that when Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, the Soviet Union's last defence minister and now the aggressive director of Aero-Flot-Russian International Airlines, announced a decision to buy 10 Boeing 737-400 jets, the wall of anguish could be heard from Tatarstan all the way up the Volga river to Ulyanovsk, an industrial belt where most of the aircraft industry is based.

Shaposhnikov's reply was typically robust: "On all the assemblies, meetings and sessions they are saying, 'Shaposhnikov is not a patriot! And if he will continue to in-

sist that he cannot buy inferior (Russian) planes, the obstinate marshal must be changed. Well the same thing happened in Stalin's time."

"Stalin asked the commander of the Red Army airforce, General Rychagov, why there were so many accidents in the airforce. Back came the answer, 'Because we are forced to fly crude aircraft.' The general closed his mouth. Forever. I was the 17th commander-in-chief of the Soviet military airforce. Eight of my predecessors were shot."

With a government paralysed by bitter faction fighting in the Kremlin, unable and unwilling to intervene, it seems things could not get much worse.

A new generation of twin-engine Tupolev 204s and 214s and four-engine long-range Ilyushin 96s are lying in the factories half-built. The airframes are of international quality and the wing design arguably better than on Boeings and Airbuses.

But the reliability of the engines — in particular the PS90 — were the main problem. Shaposhnikov said that for every PS90 on Aero-Flot's six long-range Ilyushin 96 airliners he had to keep three sets of spare parts in reserve. Enter into this all too fam-



When the Red Army airforce commander blamed the number of accidents on being forced to fly crude aircraft, Stalin closed his mouth . . . forever

iliar tale of Russian woe, a smiling confident Egyptian businessman with \$100 million (£63 million) of financial backing, more, he says, to come, and long experience of working with the Soviet Union.

He is not the first to see the gap in the market, and his prize — how to fit western engines, avionics and interiors into Russian airframes and produce Western-quality aircraft at two-thirds the price of a Boeing or Airbus. Other so-

called hybrid projects include negotiations between Aviastar, Russia's biggest plant in Ulyanovsk, and General Electric to provide engines for the Antonov 124.

But the plans of Dr Ibrahim Kamel, chairman of Kato Aromatic, an Egyptian conglomerate which, as the name implies, started life as a perfume manufacturer, are by far the most ambitious. He is not just trying to fit together parts — the airframe of a medium-range Tu-204 to the tried and

tested Rolls Royce RB211 engine — but to create the entire infrastructure for buying, leasing, marketing and servicing the aircraft.

Kato is even going to put modern galleys and lavatories, seat fabric and oxygen equipment on the Tupolevs. "I have flown in too many Aeroflot flights before," Dr Kamel said.

Kato Aromatic is thinking big. An order for 13 firm and 17 option aircraft is worth, at current prices, \$6 billion, in-

volving at least \$450 million of business for Rolls Royce. After that, another 170 aircraft could be made. Kato has \$30 million in a bank waiting, pending a government bank guarantee, to be given to Aviastar, Russia's biggest plant in Ulyanovsk, to start production rolling, and the first set of RB 211 engines arrived in Ulyanovsk in July.

"I have always believed that Russia will live and I still believe that, although an old system has been dismantled

and the new system is not yet in place, Russia sooner or later will be a super economic power. Of course, the pains of this period of transition are enormous and, for anybody who does not know this country, it would be fantastic to conceive of a project this size. But we know this industry can't be left to die."

The problems are enormous. The \$30 million kick-start money has been held up for months because the Russian government has not as

Flying far and wide... A Russian aircraft sports Rolls-Royce engines rather than those made locally. PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL

yet produced the bank guarantee. Viktor Mikhailov, the director of Aviastar, is being hit for back taxes.

There is no co-ordinated policy from above and individual plants which produce different variants of the Tupolev aircraft are forced to compete with each other for the contracts with Aeroflot.

Konstantin Titov, head of administration of Samara Region, the home of Aviastar, which made the Tu 154, the now ageing workhorse of the Russian fleet, is attempting to put together a lobby of aircraft manufacturers.

Mr Titov is for pragmatism. "If we are spending \$340 million buying Boeing, all I say is let's spend a little of this money in Russia. We are already producing spare parts for Boeing, hydraulics, hatches. Let's make Boeing deploy more orders and spend \$100 million of that money in Russia."

He understands Shaposhnikov's desire for modern planes now, but says: "If we want to continue economic reforms in Russia, we need stability and social peace. How do you persuade one million workers about the advantages of the market economy if they are all out of a job? And who will fly on Shaposhnikov's planes in his native country when people are without salaries?"

If, and it is a big if, Russia's aircraft industry can get its act together the prize could be enormous. A third player would emerge in the battle between Boeing and Airbus. The world's largest aircraft production facilities are already here.

The Norman conquest arriving at Platform 3

A French company is taking over the southern railways. Keith Harper takes the train

NEARLY a thousand years after William the Conqueror, the French have landed again on the south coast and are moving towards London sweeping all before them en route to Victoria and Charing Cross.

This time they are led by Compagnie Générale des Eaux, a French multinational with an annual turnover of £20 billion and a world-wide labour force of 219,000. On Monday, they opened up the second of their rail franchises in the UK, Connex South Eastern, the old British Rail commuter services serving Kent and West Sussex.

CGEA is running Connex South Central, the neighbouring part of the south-east coastal system, and is quickly achieving a dominant position in the capital. There are no croissants for passengers but the company hopes

to stamp its image on the public's mind with new trains, improved services and enhanced station facilities.

Connex is not the most customer friendly name, sounding more like one of those anonymous waste disposal companies CGEA has set up in Britain, but it is likely to become more famous.

Antoine Hurel, Connex Rail's chief executive, is not resting on his laurels. He is managing director of CFTA, a long established private sector train operator in Europe, and project director for rail joint ventures in Portugal, Sweden and Germany. He also managed the New York Penn station project to improve access for suburban and main line trains.

Connex, therefore, is casting its eyes at other BR passenger franchises. Another London area and one large regional railway are favourite targets. CGEA is not likely to bid for the west coast main line between London and Glasgow, though Mr Hurel said no final decision had been taken.

The French are very confident of running a private railway under tightly regulated state control. It means

they can concentrate on the service and quality control while core decisions are taken out of their hands.

As one of the largest private passenger operators in Europe, its transport division employs 20,000 staff. It provides transport in 38 countries in France, including Calais, Rouen, Bordeaux and Le Havre, and runs 520 miles of track under contract from French national railways and local authorities.

Set up almost 150 years ago to provide drinking water for French cities, the group has grown to embrace energy, waste management, telecommunications, construction and water.

Running a large part of London's commuter network will not be easy. It is taking on a largely hostile clientele which has suffered from years of under-investment. So the promise of a £400 million investment programme over the next ten years to replace clapped out old rolling stock is encouraging. But the French, like the British, may have to learn that with limited market potential, it will take years of patience to obtain healthy financial returns.

Hungary's media sell-off

European groups gather as radio and TV stations go under the hammer

Zsolt Kaplar and Rodney Jefferson

INTERNATIONAL media companies, including Luxembourg-based CLT Multi Media, part of the consortium that won the rights to Britain's Channel 5, and the Daily Mail Group, are poised to move into Hungary's broadcast media market when the government publishes a long-awaited tender for two television and two radio stations in November.

France's TFI, German publishing company WAZ and Scandinavian Broadcasting System, SBS, are also expected to bid, after the Hungarian government finalises key details such as state-imposed broadcasting and frequency fees later this month.

The two 10-year television concessions include MTV2, one of Hungary's two over-staffed and under-funded state terrestrial television stations. Local media analysts estimated each TV concession to be worth between \$60 million and \$100 million.

Hungary's media bill, passed this year, states that the two TV channels and two radio frequencies, Danubius and a brand new one, must be out of state hands by January 1. However, the law failed to consider how the government was to sell them, which delayed the tender.

The government now has help. In August, Hungary's new television and radio commission, ORTT, selected Austrian investment bank Creditanstalt Securities to manage the sale of the television con-

cessions and the investment arm of Holland's AEN-Amro to manage the sale of the seven-year radio concessions.

Foreigners after a radio station, like the Daily Mail Group, can bid alone, but those interested in the television stations must bid with a Hungarian media company.

Nap TV and MTM Communications, two Hungarian programme-makers, said they were discussing bids with foreign media companies, including CLT and SBS.

"I'm open," said Tamas Gyarmas, president and owner of Nap TV. "Maybe at one time all of them (international media companies) have visited us, but we have a common feeling we need to know the tender details first."

Representatives from the range of potential foreign bidders, local media companies and the Hungarian government are meeting in Budapest this weekend to discuss the sale.



In 1995, LG's annual sales grew 40% to over US\$64 billion.

It's nice to meet you.

It's Matt Ryan's job to listen. As a Senior Designer at LG Electronics Design-Tech, Matt must intimately understand the different aesthetics of each European country. And then translate that understanding into intelligently designed TVs, VCRs, microwaves and other products. (Matt and his colleagues even helped design their company's Red Oak House headquarters.)

At LG, we listen a lot to our customers. We think that habit explains why we're leaders in advanced applications like thin-film transistor liquid crystal displays and high-definition TV.

We're active in many other business areas too, including DRAM memory chips, pharmaceuticals, and satellite communications.

And the same dedication and customer focus Matt Ryan and his fellow designers bring to their work, our 126,000 other employees bring to our other areas of expertise.

Now, how can we help you?

http://www.lg.co.kr/



Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom of the page.

Unichem makes £657m assault on Lloyds within minutes of DTI go-ahead • Gehe retort awaited

Battle for chemist hot up

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

ATWO-WAY battle for Britain's second-largest high street pharmacist, Lloyds Chemist, was reignited yesterday after Unichem launched a £657.6 million hostile takeover offer within minutes of being given the go-ahead by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The German pharmaceutical wholesaler Gehe was yesterday widely expected to pitch in a rival bid. The company said that it was evaluating its position.

Hostilities have resumed following the DTI's accep-

tance that both Unichem and Gehe would sell parts of the bid target's chain if their takeover offers were successful.

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission made this a condition in July after referring previous bids for Lloyds by both companies.

Consumer affairs minister John Taylor declared he was "satisfied that Unichem and Gehe have given undertakings as required... to remedy the competition concerns identified by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission".

Unichem last night said a successful bid would give it a 13 per cent stake in the UK's retail chemist market — second only to Boots. It added that yesterday's Office of Fair

Trading decision to lift price controls on branded drugs had "virtually" no bearing on the valuation of the offer.

Unichem, which is bettering its previous bid by £20 million, is offering 16 new Unichem shares plus £25p in cash for every 10 Lloyds shares. That places a value of 505.4p on the bid target's shares. Unichem shares surged 17p to 521.5p on expectation of a higher offer from Gehe. Shares in Lloyds eased 9.5p to 248.5p. Gehe share trading in Frankfurt was off DM2 at DM105.

Lloyds Chemists yesterday declined to comment. "We have not yet resolved what recommendations to make", said finance director Jonathan Fellows. "I would hope

to make an announcement in the next few days."

Unichem, which already owns nearly 10 per cent of the takeover target, confirmed that as part of its agreement with the MMC it would sell part of the Lloyds business if the bid succeeded. This includes sale of the warehouse operations and divestment of specialist cosmetic shops.

Jeffery Harris, Unichem's chief executive, insisted the deal would be "materially earnings-enhancing within 12 months". It could result in cost savings of more than £15 million in the first 12 months, rising to £20 million thereafter.

Mr Harris added: "Our acquisition of Lloyds Chemists presents a great opportunity

for both sets of shareholders. We believe that our extensive retail expertise, together with our unparalleled pharmaceutical distribution capabilities, will greatly enhance both businesses."

Dieter Kammerer, Gehe chairman, declined to say how his company would respond, although it is widely expected to proceed with a counter-bid. Before the last bidding round was halted by the MMC, Gehe had tabled an offer worth around £350 million. Mr Kammerer attacked Unichem's bid, claiming that the predator lacked "experience in integrating major acquisitions".

He said: "This is especially true in the light of Lloyds Chemists' reduced profitabil-

ity and the reduced potential for synergies as a result of the DTI's ruling."

Gehe, which is a pan-European force in the retail pharmaceutical market, is already the fourth-biggest player in the British high street chemist market following its acquisition in April of A.A.H.

The company is expected to await the impact of the new offer on the Unichem share price before tabling a rival bid.

Yesterday the company directed its energies into highlighting the weaknesses in Unichem's bid. The company said that Unichem's own broker had downgraded its estimate for the company's current year earnings by 15 per cent.

Notebook

Keep medicine out of price war



Alex Brummer

HAVING helped batter the last remaining bastion of retail price maintenance — non-prescription drugs — the Asda boss, Archie Norman, can sail off into the sunset as consumer champion and Tory MP.

There can be little doubt that the direct action mounted by Asda, in reducing the prices of food supplements and popular pain relievers like paracetamol, encouraged the director general of fair trading, John Bridgeman, to refer the matter to the Restrictive Practices Court. It was the court that 26 years ago put in place the orders which allowed manufacturers to enforce minimum prices.

In general terms, any moves that liberalise rigged markets — and there are now very few in Britain — are to be applauded. They should mean lower prices for the consumer, lower overall inflation and higher demand for the products, which creates more jobs.

Some supermarket shoppers will recognise that, as margins are later restored, the fresh fruit they buy in Tesco or Waitrose has become a great deal more pricey than that bought directly from the greengrocer.

Putting this aside, however, non-prescription drugs remain a special case. In the first instance it is perhaps not too sensible that a packet of pain relievers, or some of the strong drugs that have gone non-prescription, should be sold off as cheaply as a tube of Smarties. Making potential drug abuse cheaper does not seem any more sensible than removing a slice of the excise duties on cigarettes.

But the real issue is what effect such a move would have on the pharmacy trade. The larger retailers, like Boots, — which has been moving back into the high street with smaller stores — have the buying and manufacturing capacity to take on Asda and the rest as they move into classic price-cutting mode. But most of the pharmacies in Britain are sole traders, deeply rooted in community health care.

Take away the margins they earn on non-prescription medicines and the elderly and the young may find themselves having to travel much further to deal with their medical needs.

There may well be room for lower prices in food supplements such as vitamins and iron, which has been a large part of the Asda campaign. But non-prescription drugs are a special category which should be treated differently.

opportunity for directly linking Thomson with GEC's core electronics business, Marconi.

That has proved not to be the case. The French Lagardere group, which already has the Matra missile partnership with British Aerospace, has emerged as the successful candidate for a trade deal — which the French government sees as a key part of its defence restructuring.

The icing on the cake was the promise by an outside player in all of these manoeuvres, Daewoo, to take charge of Thomson's consumer electronics and double the number of jobs. A chance not to be missed for the Chirac administration.

Despite the widespread assumption that the approved deal must be better for BAE than GEC, the game is by no means over. GEC has some strategic thinking to do: hence the appointment this week of Jack Fryer to the same post of strategic director that he held when he worked at ways in which GEC to lock itself into some broader defence alliances.

In the recent past GEC has set its cap at BAE's defence interests. As the supplier of much of the electronic kit to BAE's military output, GEC-Marconi will always have an ongoing interest. Moreover, it is not without cards in the Lagardere deal. GEC holds some 24 per cent of the equity, has a joint satellite deal with Matra and a joint sonar deal with Thomson. It will have plenty of opportunities, if it wants them, to cut itself into the next, decisive round of creating a European defence champion.



Muscovites are introduced to the Western pastime of watching a movie while eating popcorn and drinking Coca-Cola. Kodak Cinema World, a new 42,000sq ft retail and entertainment complex, will show dubbed first-run European and Hollywood films and the work of Russia's own movie-makers — and sell videos to offset a huge black market.

Cable firms planning for £600m link-up

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

BELL Cablemedia looks set to become the most powerful force in the fast-expanding British cable television market by clinching control of rival Videotron in a deal worth an estimated £600 million according to well placed City sources last night.

The Anglo-Canadian company is understood to have won the deal in a three-way auction against Germany's Deutsche Telekom and International CableTel, another British cable operator.

Dutch telecom operator NTT is understood to have been interested but to have pulled out towards the final stages of the bidding.

News of the transaction is expected to be released over the next few days. The company last night was not returning calls.

Taking control of Videotron, in which Bell Cablemedia already holds a 26 per cent stake, gives the bidder the chance to increase radically its penetration of the UK market. It is Britain's third biggest cable TV company, its main shareholders are Bell Canada, which has a 42 per cent stake and Cable & Wire-

less, which holds nearly 13 per cent.

Merging with Videotron will give Bell Cablemedia access into the City and the Thames Valley. Videotron's UK division reported a net loss of £7.5 million in the quarter to May 31 against a loss of £2.7 million in the same period a year ago. It blamed the deepening deficit on higher interest expenses and unchanged foreign exchange losses. But it also disclosed that it has been increasing its market share.

The stake was put up for sale by Videotron's parent, a Montreal-based cable company. The Canadian company is understood to be planning to concentrate on the newly liberalised US market.

Bell Cablemedia has recently shaken up its management team by a series of top-level appointments. The company boosted revenues for the first six months of the year by £15.5 million to £33.3 million. It has impressed analysts by reporting better retention of existing customers at a time when it is building up market share, particularly in the telecom market. But it is still losing money because of the cost of building up cable networks.

Major admits debt is too high as Clarke struggles to find tax cut cash

Richard Thomas
and **Simon Kennedy**

JOHAN MAJOR admitted yesterday that the burden of government was a "blot on the horizon" of an otherwise healthy, low-inflation economy.

As the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, completed a meeting with his advisers on options for next month's Budget, the Prime Minister said Britain had managed to achieve stronger economic growth than European competitors without inflating prices.

But he told a meeting of businessmen in Chelmsford that borrowing was too high. "The only economic blot on the horizon is the size of the fiscal deficit," he said. "That is a problem."

His admission followed a disappointing public borrowing figure for September — when the state was forced to

borrow £3.5 billion despite a £1 billion privatisation windfall — and highlighted Mr Clarke's difficulty in finding some spare cash for tax cuts.

According to the Treasury, Mr Clarke's Budget arithmetic is also being complicated by the slow progress in starting work on the Private Finance Initiative projects

PFI spending in 1996-97 — but serious delays with projects in the health sector mean that the Government is struggling to hit this figure.

The Bank of England said yesterday that higher-than-expected borrowing had forced up its broad measure of money supply, M4. Over the year to September, M4 in-

battle to force Mr Clarke to put up interest rates.

However, some economists said that the increase in the public sector element was offset by a weaker private sector. Subdued credit growth has caused lending to fall to £3.5 billion, the lowest since August 1995.

Simon Briscoe, the chief economist at Nikko, said this weaker credit demand cancelled out the strong money supply growth and the figures were therefore not compatible with higher inflation.

Jonathan Loynes of HSBC Greenwell said: "As long as M4 holds above the monitoring range, Eddie George will continue to hike rates."

But Mr Loynes pointed to a slowdown in the growth of consumer credit and more subdued mortgage lending as signs that the domestic economy would not trigger price rises.

'Only economic blot on the horizon is the size of the fiscal deficit'

agreed by the Government.

The Chancellor will announce at a conference on Monday that £7 billion of projects have been earmarked, but behind the scenes he is concerned that the agreements are not being translated into capital spending.

In last year's Budget, Mr Clarke forecast £1.9 billion of

created by 9.9 per cent — well above the Government's monitoring range of 3 to 9 per cent. State borrowing accounts for almost all of the increase.

City analysts said Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, would use the rebound in the money supply as ammunition in his

Magnox chief pleads for funds to hasten merger

Simon Beavis
Industrial Editor

THE Government was yesterday urged to make an early commitment to provide funding to British Nuclear Fuels so that it can merge its operation with Magnox Electric, the atomic power generator, by April 1998.

Mark Baker, chairman of Magnox Electric, said that the

issue of financial support — which could run to hundreds of millions of pounds — was one that needed to be addressed soon.

The Government made it a fundamental part of its plans to privatise British Energy, the nuclear company that owns the country's eight most modern atomic reactors, that Magnox should eventually be merged into the state-owned nuclear waste group, BNFL.

Fraud-busting lawyer stands accused of cheating his employer

Mark Tran in New York

LOYD'S embattled insurance market, appeared to have discovered a model investigator when it engaged James Dougherty, a Miami lawyer, to crack a multimillion-dollar international insurance racket.

Mr Dougherty worked tirelessly for the insurance market. He travelled to central America, Europe and the Middle East to uncover the activities of Munther Bilbeisi, a Lebanese businessman then living in Boca Raton, Florida, who had flooded Lloyd's with suspect claims.

Between 1989 and 1992, Mr Dougherty defeated those bogus claims in court. In one episode, Mr Bilbeisi tried to collect millions after falsely reporting that a high-grade shipment of Guatemalan coffee had been switched for a lower grade. Mr Dougherty also

foiled a multi-million-dollar claim for a lost Chinese vase and Oriental rugs that were worth far less.

Mr Dougherty saved Lloyd's millions but in the process was swindling the market out of millions, according to Lloyd's statements in a law suit filed in Miami. Lloyd's alleges that Mr Dougherty put in huge and false expense claims.

Lloyd's and Mr Dougherty fell out in April 1992.

"This case is ironic because a lawyer engaged to uncover a swindle is accused of swindling his own client," Thomas Mulvihill, the prosecuting attorney, said. "Dougherty billed the underwriters who hired him for hundreds of hours that were never worked. Before 1992, he never prepared time slips."

If convicted, Mr Dougherty could face, in the market, a \$2 million (£1.25 million) fine and be forced to pay restitution. The case is expected to run until the end of the year.

In his opening statement, Mr Dougherty's attorney, Miguel Caridad, said: "My client paid much of the money for investigations and for witness payments in Guatemala. Lloyd's got its money's worth, there is no doubt about that."

New cancer study hits tobacco firms

Researchers claim to have established definitive link, Mark Tran reports

A NEW study purporting to show a definitive link between smoking and cancer sent the embattled tobacco industry reeling yesterday.

The American research findings, published in the journal *Science*, may provide fresh ammunition for class or group action suits in Britain and the US that could lead to billions of dollars worth of compensation payments from the tobacco companies to smokers and former smokers. But some US analysts insisted they would not worsen the tobacco firms' legal position.

On Wall Street, shares of Philip Morris and other tobacco companies fell by around 5 per cent.

"It's an exciting finding," Kenneth Olden, director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences,

said. "Much of the evidence we have that smoking causes lung cancer is circumstantial, although extremely strong. It's really good to have some definitive evidence to support it."

Research workers and public health experts have long believed that smoking causes lung cancer, on the basis of the statistical evidence accumulated over the years.

But cigarette makers have been able to argue that although smoking may be a factor in cancer there is no evidence of a direct cause. That argument has helped the tobacco industry to avoid paying a single penny in damages in all the law suits it has faced over the years.

But now two teams of scientists at a Californian research institute say they have shown precisely how a chemical in cigarette smoke can damage a gene that otherwise prevents out-of-control cell growth, the hallmark of cancer. A series of laboratory experiments in Texas and California showed that a chemical in tobacco tar can damage a gene known as p53.

News in brief

Going for brokers

Gerrard & National Holdings, discount house and brokers, said yesterday it has agreed to buy rival King & Shaxson Holdings for £53.7 million. The takeover would create the UK's largest brokerage for private investors, Gerrard Group Plc, with almost £10 billion under management. — *Bloombergs*

On the wagons

Stagecoach, the bus and rail company, avoided a monopolies commission inquiry into its £475.6 million purchase of Porterbrook, a rail carriage leasing company, after accepting government competition limits. — *Bloombergs*

TI hard to stop

Henderson Investors' decision to reject TI Group's bid for Sweden's Forsberga engineering company is unlikely to stop the deal, analysts said.

Cross-media merger

Scottish Television announced the formal go-ahead of its £130 million takeover of Caledonian, publishers in Glasgow of the Herald and the Evening Times.

Olivetti shores up its boardroom

ITALY's troubled Olivetti has appointed four new directors to its board in an effort to head off mounting criticisms by investors — many of them London-based institutions — amid a fresh wave of selling that drove down its share price more than 5 per cent yesterday.

The new directors include Dario Trevisan, a Milan lawyer who specialises in representing foreign shareholders in Italian companies. London institutions have been pushing for him to be appointed since Olivetti expressed its willingness to bring in a representative of its outside shareholders.

The other new board members are Gordon Owen, chairman of Energis and Acorn Computers, in which Olivetti has a stake; French financier Gérard Worms; and Bruno Lamborghini, deputy chairman of Olivetti Telematic, the group's telecoms unit.

About 5,000 Olivetti employees staged a demonstration in Rome yesterday to call for a "credible plan to rebuild and relaunch" the group.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.8330	France 8.00	Italy 2.392	Singapore 2.19
Austria 16.67	Germany 2.3725	Malta 0.5595	South Africa 7.10
Belgium 48.80	Greece 373.75	Netherlands 2.8645	Spain 198.65
Canada 2.0915	Hong Kong 11.95	New Zealand 2.1840	Sweden 10.37
Cyprus 0.7180	Ireland 0.9645	Norway 10.10	Switzerland 1.94
Denmark 9.1280	Portugal 240.50	Turkey 148.171	USA 1.65
Finland 7.24	Saudi Arabia 5.91	USA 1.65	

Supplied by *Market Data* (including train rates and interest rates)

Boeing

Rolls Royce

conquest

Platform 3

media sell-c

radio and

number

0971 00135

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

The lost picture shows

Britain's film makers need Kenneth Clarke to be a hero and he is reading from a different script. But LISA BUCKINGHAM finds die-hard campaigners never give up

BRUCE WILLIS would have abetted into Great George Street brandishing a sub-machine gun to extract forcibly a multi-million pound ransom from cowering boards of stuffy Treasury mandarins.

Real life film advocates will find the terrain far harder going. The Chancellor is tucking away every last penny in order to fund a last ditch grasp at election victory with income tax cuts. Many canny lobbyists have already given up the ghost, deciding that largesse for their industries will have to wait.

Yet next week the UK film industry — no doubt jauntily packing reels of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* under its arms — will deliver what it regards as its best shot for years at persuading Kenneth Clarke to provide handouts for film makers.

The Inland Revenue was yesterday expected to sign off a joint study with the British Screen Advisory Council into the implications of providing much more generous tax breaks. The investigation is believed to reveal that if film makers can write off all their production costs in one year, it would provide a tax pay-back within about 18 months. But that could be too long for a Chancellor with limited time.

The British film industry's leading lights still reckon this is their best chance to create

a level playing field on subsidies to transform the current mini-boom into sustainable growth rather than — as has happened with monotonous regularity — see the bubble burst as the Yanks leave town.

Tax breaks would encourage investment, and send a psychological signal that the government was prepared to back the industry, they argue. When Britain's global trade influence is declining, film makers argue that pumping culture on to the world's movie screens would be an apt counter measure.

The British Screen Advisory Council also stresses the spin-off benefits of a strong film industry, such as increases in tourism. If Britain could replicate the *Crocodile Dundee* Effect in Australia, that would mean an extra four million visitors bringing in about £2 billion of extra revenue a year.

On the surface the British film industry looks quite good. Successes such as *Four Weddings and a Funeral* and *Trainspotting* have provided a welcome fillip. And the number of releases has risen from fewer than 400 in 1994 to an expected 420 in 1996. And more money is flowing into the sector this year. Last month the Star Wars director George Lucas announced he would shoot three space epics in the UK using British actors and technicians — in a £1.3 billion project. They will be shot at Leavesden Studios,

a £200 million aerodrome conversion.

Shepperton Studios was recently acquired by Ridley Scott — director of *Bladerunner* — and his brother Tony, who produced *Thelma and Louise*. Another film studio is planned to form part of a joint venture. Hollywood-style, theme park on the outskirts of London, funded by Time Warner in partnership with United News and Media.

Earlier this year the ITV companies said they would invest £100 million in feature film production over the next five years. Already the BBC and Channel 4 are active, with the latter's credits including *Trainspotting*, *Secrets and Lies* and *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, although the profits went to the distributors because, as so often happens, it sold the rights.

In addition, the Arts Council has given the go ahead for plans to plough £160 million of National Lottery money into film production.

Overall investment has risen from just over £130 million in 1993 to £310 million last year. Further rises are expected this year. There has also been a greater number of European co-productions, giving British film makers access to EC subsidies.

But the BSAC says: "There is a lot more activity than for many years but, in real terms, we are still only back to the levels of 10 years ago. And, crucially, budgets for individual movies have fallen."

One of the major factors driving the current revival is the good exchange rate. Premila Hoon, director of entertainment finance at Guinness Mahon — one of the few serious film finance operations in the country — said: "There has been a 100 per cent jump in film production money this year. That is very positive, but does it indicate that a firm trend is emerging and are structures being formed which will cater for a longer term recovery?"

Ms Hoon added that most of the reason for the mini-boom is the exchange rate, now beginning to look less favourable. "That is a fundamental arbiter of inward investment in films, even though the UK has an excellent infrastructure."

The price of making films in the US has soared, partly thanks to the stratospheric sums now commanded by Hollywood stars. But powerful Hollywood unions have upped the ante for technicians and other less high profile members of the film team, making Britain look comparatively cheap.

It is estimated that a film can be made for about a third less in Britain than in the US. But those attractions are often simply not enough. When Mel Gibson wanted to make *Braveheart*, a £29 million film charting the loves and triumphs of Scotland's William Wallace, he plumped for Ireland where tax breaks provide a decided financial edge. At present the British government allows production costs to be written off over three years. But reducing this to one year — the break film makers want — could mean a 6 per cent budget saving for producers.

The entire structure of the UK film industry needs rethinking before an investment can be successfully con-

verted into a production stream with the strength to withstand the odd flop.

Experts argue that, without fundamental change, the UK will continue to be vulnerable to the Goldcrest factor — the company with so much promise that went belly up after box office failures such as *Revolution*, which starred Al Pacino, and *The Mission*.

One executive said: "We don't get the subsidies they do on the Continent and we simply don't have the size or critical mass enjoyed by the American companies."

HOLLYWOOD is, of course, hardly immune to box office turkeys — think only of *Waterworld*, the \$200 million vehicle for Kevin Costner, which ended up splashing red ink all over the finances of Universal Studios.

But, as Ms Hoon pointed out, "the US studios have very sound businesses underpinned by huge libraries. They are vertically integrated corporations with interests in property, theme parks and television. They produce between 25 and 30 films a year each of which spreads the risk. There might be five dogs, but then you will get a Terminator and that will carry the failures. The portfolio effect is crucial."

Recent financial results from most of the Hollywood giants have been tepid but films — or "software" in multi-media revolution speak — can be made to work over and over again if you own a TV network, and characters can be worth their weight in gold if you can use them as the focus for a theme park ride.

The British experience is completely different. Here the failure of one film tends to result in the collapse of the

whole venture. The industry is highly fragmented, largely composed of individuals and small production groups with the only domestic players of any size, such as the Rank Organisation, virtually moribund in terms of current activity.

"We are talking about a very small cottage industry," Ms Hoon said. "There are no economies of scale, no studio system. It is not really a business at all."

Despite the artistic concerns about Lottery money, and sceptical comments that it is bound to lead to more "jobs for the boys", harder headed executives in the film world feel that the award of money to "franchises" could lay the foundations for better integrated businesses — even if these are minuscule in comparison with Hollywood.

Something more recognis-

ably corporate might help to turn the current trickle of City money into something more substantial. The creation of these franchise groups might also see the UK film industry give birth to management — something presently in woefully short supply.

And, although the groups will, initially be small scale, it is envisaged that they would finance and produce a series of five to six movies a year which, in theory, should provide an element of safety even if some of the products failed.

But the problem about talking about, let alone imposing, structure on the UK industry raises the inevitable showdown between the luvvies and the accountants.

There are plenty of directors and technicians who have given up in despair and de-camped to Hollywood.

There are others who prefer the £20,000 a day in directing commercials. But there are plenty of people in the world of film who cherish their independence and feel hugely threatened at the idea that a manager might attempt to trim their creative wings.

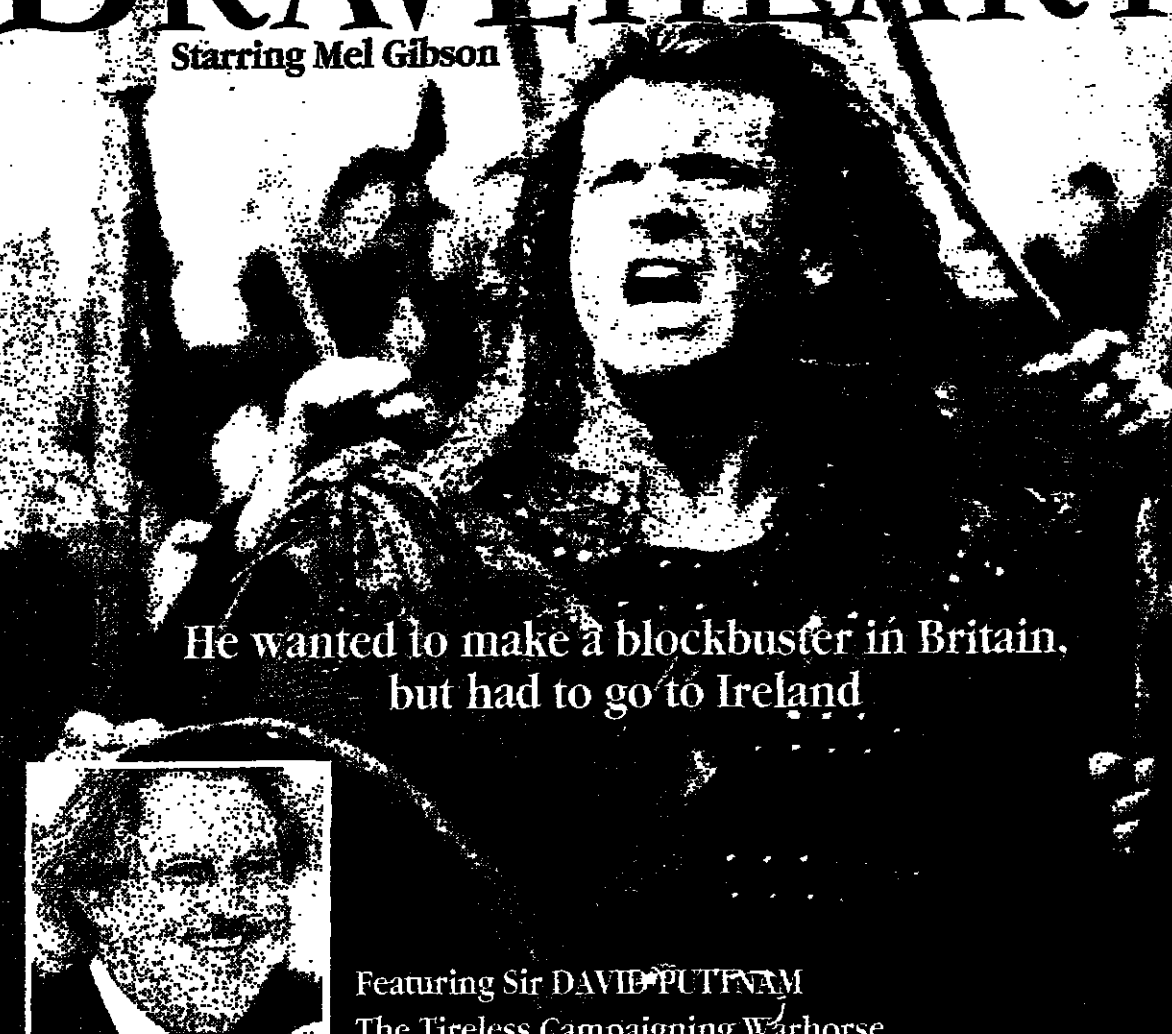
One production executive said: "There will be tensions between the creatives and the business executives. But these can be healthy and if one gets the upper hand for too long, there tends to be a sharp swing in the other direction. But if we don't start to think along those lines we will be heading for trouble."

And Ms Hoon concluded: "Ultimately, unless we become a business, survival will become a very real question. You can weave wonderful baskets, but that is no use unless you are organised to sell them."

An epic tale of an industry that refused to die

Making BRAVEHEART

Starring Mel Gibson




He wanted to make a blockbuster in Britain, but had to go to Ireland

Featuring Sir DAVID PUTTFAM
The Tireless Campaigning Warhorse

Co-starring VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY
The Tory songbird fresh from her Bournemouth triumph!

20TH CENTURY FOX Presents AN ICON PRODUCTION A RANK ORGANISATION PRODUCTION A MEL GIBSON FILM
MEL GIBSON BRAVEHEART THE BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE IS IRISH SCENARIOS BY MICKY
MONTAGUE LIZ COULSON-WELL IN COLLABORATION WITH THE VIDEOFESTIVE LAND COMPANY

- ### REEL FACTS
- British film makers have won a third of all Oscars in the past 20 years
 - More than two-thirds of films are made in English yet the UK has only 7 per cent of the market, worth £1 billion a year
 - The world's film industry generates revenues of about £30 billion a year
 - Tax incentives for the UK industry could create 1,200 jobs
 - The Amersham hotel bedroom featured in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* is booked until the end of next year
 - Hollywood films account for 85 per cent of box office takings in the UK
 - It is 15 years since Colin Welland predicted a British invasion of Hollywood when he collected the Oscar for *Chariots of Fire*
 - The audio-visual industry has overtaken aerospace as America's biggest overseas earner
 - *Crocodile Dundee* helped increase the number of US tourists to Australia by a fifth
 - Merchandising revenues for US films outstrip box office takings by about three to one



and get a free 24-hour helpline. Interested?

Call 0800 333 800 for a motor, or home quote

Phone for a free quote weekdays 8am-8pm, Saturday 9am-2pm. Motor insurance not available in Northern Ireland. We regret that we cannot quote for rented/unfurnished accommodation.

Blockbusters

Top five British box office hits of the 1990s. Millions.

Four Weddings and a Funeral	72.2
The Crying Game	47.7
Lawnmower Man	27.7
Much Ado about Nothing	22.2
Madness of King George	17.7

Cost Earnings

Source: Arts Council

Quick Crossword No. 8261

Solution No. 8260

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Across

- Lift-and-carry vehicle (4-4,5)
- Figures (7)
- Freight (5)
- Washbasin — to fall (4)
- European republic (8)
- Cooking ingredients and instructions (6)
- Found — copied (6)
- Motherly (8)
- Spice — club (4)
- Stadium (5)

Down

- One may get excited — or keeps cool (3)
- Derived from Latin (language) (7)
- Game — bird (4)
- Go after — and succeed (5)
- Relictant (8)
- Dismantle (5)

7 Information (9)

- Rugby player (5,4)
- Near — an entryway (8)
- Break down — or eulogy (5,2)
- Fix (5)
- Green letter (5)
- Wealthy (4)
- Beat — bronze (3)

Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0891 338 248. Calls cost 50p per minute Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm, and 45p per minute at all other times. Service supplied by ATS

NATIO SAVING

KEEP YOUR MONEY INVESTED

YOU WANT THE BEST OF YOUR SAVINGS INVESTMENT

Handwritten note: 1.50

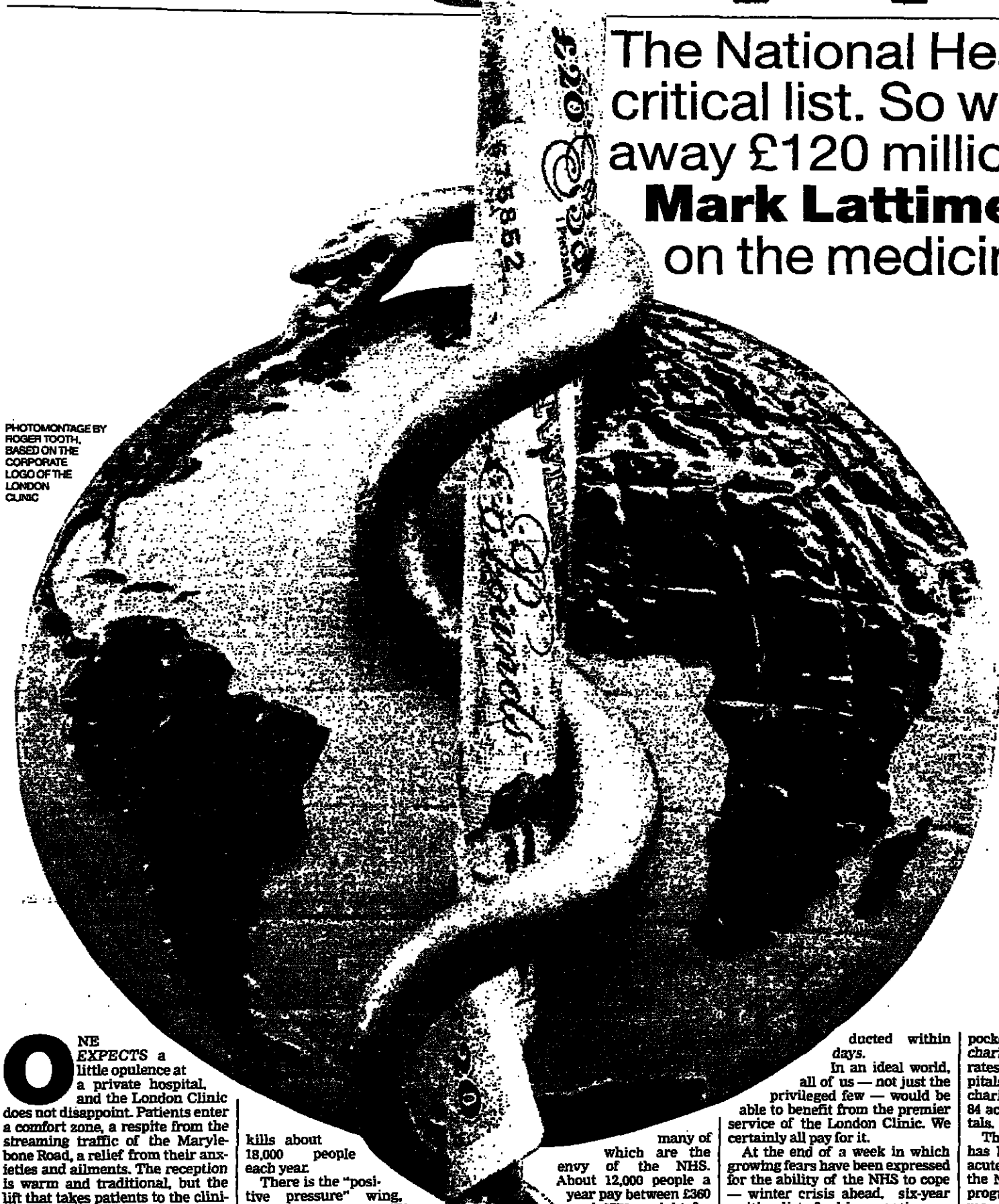
الجمعة 19 أكتوبر 1996

The Guardian the week

The National Health Service is on the critical list. So why are taxpayers giving away £120 million to private hospitals?
Mark Lattimer and Simon Garfield
on the medicine we can't afford

Going private at your expense

PHOTOMONTAGE BY ROGER TOOTH, BASED ON THE CORPORATE LOGO OF THE LONDON CLINIC



ONE EXPECTS a little opulence at a private hospital, and the London Clinic does not disappoint. Patients enter a comfort zone, a respite from the streaming traffic of the Marylebone Road, a relief from their anxieties and ailments. The reception is warm and traditional, but the lift that takes patients to the clinical floor is something else; it contains a virtual reality fish tank in the shape of a waiting room. A nurse says that many clients "momentarily forget their worries as their curiosity takes over".

Once relaxed, a private patient may choose from a highly impressive list of services. There is the new endoscopy unit, opened just two weeks ago at a cost of £2 million, a vital weapon in the early detection of the colon cancer that

kills about 18,000 people each year. There is the "positive pressure" wing, part of a recent \$5 million investment in the medical oncology unit, invaluable in treating those with depleted immune systems. And, of course, there is the plastic and reconstructive unit, dealing with facelifts, breast enhancements and nose jobs.

The private patient, or the patient's medical insurers, pay heavily for these elite services, which are the envy of the NHS. About 12,000 people a year pay between £360 and £770 a night for the privilege of staying at the London Clinic, with medical costs on top. A further 50,000 people pay for day-care each year. Unlike NHS patients, they don't have to wait long to see a consultant and, with 171 beds and seven state-of-the-art operating theatres, surgery can be con-

ducted within days. In an ideal world, all of us — not just the privileged few — would be able to benefit from the premier service of the London Clinic. We certainly all pay for it. At the end of a week in which growing fears have been expressed for the ability of the NHS to cope — winter crisis ahead, six-year waiting lists for hip operations — it may anger some taxpayers to learn that the London Clinic is a registered charity. And as a charity, it is estimated to benefit from £1.7 million in tax breaks every year, at the expense of those taxpayers.

And the London Clinic is not alone. Over one third of private hospitals use charitable status in order to avoid paying any corporation tax or capital gains tax, and to pocket the standard 80 per cent charitable relief on business rates. The number of private hospitals operating under the guise of charitable status has now reached 84 acute and 11 psychiatric hospitals.

The Nuffield Hospitals group has become the largest sector of acute hospitals in Britain outside the NHS, with a bold acquisition programme and a turnover of more than £120 million a year. But its official name is the Nuffield Nursing Homes Trust, registered as a charity to "prevent, relieve and cure sickness and ill health of every kind". The non-charitable BUPA group had to pay £9 million in corporation tax in 1994 for the 29 hospitals it runs; Nuffield paid nothing. The argument that private hospitals are manipulating charitable status to gain what amounts to a state subsidy of £40 million has been well rehearsed. This week Labour warned it would require such schools to prove they were providing a service to local communities or risk losing the perk. Yet turn to health, and few people are aware that a similar scam is insidiously being used to undermine the NHS by encouraging the spread of private hospitals. A report to be published next month by a charity umbrella group, the Directory of Social Change, estimates that the total value of charitable benefits for private health may exceed £35 million a year. Add to that the value of tax relief on private medical insurance and the sum lost to the taxpayer in subsidies comes to over £120 million — three times that awarded to public schools. Some public schools have tried to justify their status as charities


No. 8261

NATIONAL SAVINGS
Investment Ideas

HELPING YOU MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS

I'VE JUST SPENT SIX HOURS OF MY LIFE filling in my Tax Return. Are there any worthwhile tax-free investments that don't have to be declared?

Sheila Walker
WILDSTONE



STEFANIE BRAYNE
National Savings

"Yes, National Savings tax-free investment schemes do not need to be mentioned on your Tax Return. Like our Fixed Interest Savings Certificates, with a guaranteed rate of 5.35%pa tax-free over five years (equivalent to 8.9%pa if you're a higher rate taxpayer), we think they are definitely worthwhile."

Buy now using the application form in Jobs and Money. Or for a full guide to our Fixed Interest Savings Certificates, freecall 0500 500 000, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

NATIONAL SAVINGS
Unique Investment Opportunities
www.treasury.gov.uk

FJ1GD5

the week that was

Them on them

The global view

Local government officials in East Lombok have come up with a new policy designed to keep local women faithful: deny them contraception. Women are not allowed to ask for birth control devices while their husbands are working overseas. "It's meant as a precaution so lonely housewives won't be tempted to do negative things while their husbands are away" said a spokesman for the East Lombok regency. Jakarta Post

Whatever one's attitude towards Alexander Lebed, positive or negative,

the fact of his departure has had the beneficial effect of lowering tensions in Moscow. The question is what will now happen in Chechnya and around the whole issue. This is the main danger in the wake of the president's decision. Russian daily, Nezavisimaya Gazeta

Bob Dole fired poison dipped arrows every chance he got — trust, patriotism, peace, FBI files, affirmative action, gay marriages, flag desecration, school prayer and drugs at the border — but nothing hit the target. LA Times political columnist, Robert Scheer, on the last television debate of the US presidential election campaign.

Us on us

The British view

Earlier this year, Mr Peter Thurnham put great emphasis on a Mori poll he commissioned, which purported to show that Bolton North East electors would support him if he resigned the Tory Party Whip. But we do not elect MPs by opinion polls. He should resign as an MP now and allow the voters to decide who they want to represent them. Bolton Evening News

The behaviour of Aston Villa keeper Mark Bosnich to Tottenham Hotspur fans on Saturday was incredibly stupid. Giving a Nazi salute to supporters with strong ties to the Jewish community, is

the height of bad taste. The gesture was, he said, a bit of a "banter" which got a bit out of hand. The Birmingham Post

It was the nail-biting 25th night of Mr Great Britain's election campaign on the makeshift stage of the Slice of Heaven nightclub in a small town near Sheffield stood the nervous contestants. For 22-year-old Kevin from Swansea, there were several areas for improvement in his performance: "I have been told some tips like blowing kisses at the audience and taking plastic roses to throw at them. I think I'll also have to get more of a tan. The guy who won was really tanned." The Western Mail



THEME OF THE WEEK
ROUES

Roué was the noun coined by Philippe, Duke of Orleans, in the 18th century to classify his disolute, rakish, debauched Court companions; they were, the image suggested, "broken on the wheel" of their lifestyles.

Conventional wisdom this week cast Mick Jagger as a roué, thanks to his increasingly tragic attempts to get off with a series of young women, including, it is rumoured, Czech models, Janis Radlick, Jagger's wife, Jerry Hall, visited Princess Diana's divorce lawyer, prompting speculation that

a divorce was imminent. Worse still, one of Jagger's recent film-ees, 23-year-old Nicole Erak, said the most wounding thing possible about a roué — that she ended up pitying him because, "he obviously does what he does for his own self-confidence."

The last time a broken-on-the-wheel metaphor was used in relation to Jagger, the wearing down of the singer was said by even ardent-Conservatives to be society's fault. A Times editorial in July 1967, appearing after Jagger was ousted by the Beatles, stated: "Who breaks a butterfly on a wheel?" As Jagger was 22, it was valid to view him as a hapless, pretty victim of draconian drug laws. Now he's just another silly old sod for whom things ain't what they used to be, his youth hood is seen as strictly self-earned.

Yet at what stage in his life should an ageing patch of mutton cease frolicking like



a lamb? It's a question one imagines the neo-roué Andrew Neil asks with ever greater urgency these days. His delightfully-unself-conscious memoir, serialised during the week, was completely candid — embarrassingly candid, almost — about the Pamela Bourke business and his exasperatingly Trumpified life.

It must have made younger men, weighed down with concerns over children, bills and shelves to put up, wonder where Neil gets the energy from. Maybe, in truth, they also felt a soupçon of sadness for the old goat and his endearing refusal to grow up.

Another ageing rock star flirting dangerously with roud status, Phil Collins, was reported as having made the unfortunate observation that running away with a 22-year-old was helping to cure his baldness. "Orlanne's got me drinking ginseeng and eating raw ginger root," he said. "Eloping



Jagger and Radlick... Rolling Stone romance?

In this week of the roué, let us thank, well, God, I guess, for the anti-fetters of roué, the anti matter debauchee, Sir (Heath) Cliff Richard. Having done everything required to attract attention — attempting to be a spicing chicken at 55, casting himself as meson, moody stubby, snarling hero of his own stage production of Wuthering Heights — he received instead of the anticipated sneers, a rapturous reception for his Birmingham stage debut.

Sir Cliff's success at avoiding the label of roué along with almost everything else in life is telling proof of something, but it is not obvious quite what. Jonathan Margolis

Life and death in the ring

This week last year

October 13 1995

IT WAS an ordinary fight at the Hospitality Inn, Glasgow, when James Murray fought Drew Docherty for the British bantamweight title. Some paid £80 to watch it over dinner while others, for £30, stood around the edge drinking.

Thirty seconds before the end of the twelfth and final round, Murray, a 25-year-old, eight-stone landscape gardener, was knocked out.

The crowd rioted. Drunken spectators impeded the passage of the paramedics, and bottles were hurled as Murray lay dying. His family was told he was clinically dead the following evening.

Murray's father, Ken, immediately said that boxing was not to blame for his son's death and that Drew Docherty was welcome in his house any time. However, Murray's death ignited the debate about the dangers of boxing.

On October 26, the report commissioned from an independent panel of neurologists after the 1994 death of Bradley Stone was published. Its impact was greatly increased by Murray's death.



James Murray is counted out in the tragic Glasgow fight

The neurologists recommended measures including the introduction of a compulsory MRI brain scan for all boxers and weighing them 24 hours before a fight, with other random weigh-ins to avoid last-minute dehydration to reach a target weight. They also wanted to see a prominent presence of doctors, able to attract the referee's attention at any time.

Most of these measures were implemented immediately, though the MRI scan-

title against Ray Close, citing his opponent's problematic brain scan of 1994.

In January, Pat Cowdell, a small-hall promoter, called a meeting of licensed promoters, managers and boxers to marshal opposition to the safety reforms, largely objecting on financial grounds. But his protest failed to attract significant support.

It was decided that banning alcohol was impractical, not least because many of the rioters at the Murray fight were drunk when they arrived.

A spokeswoman for the British Medical Association, which in 1982 adopted the policy that boxing should be banned says: "We don't think safety measures will make a lot of difference. They're a drop in the ocean: the sport should be banned."

Meanwhile, Murray's family is coming to terms with his loss. "With James Murray," says Dr Whiteson, "there was nothing we could have done, even if he'd been in the neuro-surgical ward of the local hospital. Generally, it is safer than it was a year ago, but it's a dangerous sport. It will never be 100 per cent safe." Emily Barr

Should homosexual union be blessed by the church?

YES "If Christian lesbians and gay men feel the need to have their partnership recognised and blessed it would be a hard-hearted soul who would refuse them the emotional and religious comfort, satisfaction and support that gives them. This support is being denied by traditionalist conservative evangelicals who cannot accept any deviation from the notion that sex belongs exclusively within heterosexual marriage. Such a notion is an intolerant, outdated and short-sighted view of human relations." David Smith, Gay Times

NO "The definition of marriage is the public commitment made between a man and a woman who bring together their kin and friends to witness their



making of a life-long commitment to each other. One could not possibly use the word marriage to mean anything else. There are certain structures which underline the best ways for human beings to function and if you say 'anything goes' you undermine all those various other things." Mrs Margaret Killingray of the Institute for contemporary Christianity

YES "John Boswell, Professor of history at Yale University has shown beyond reasonable doubt that the church has involved itself in blessing same sex couples since the seventh century and probably since the fourth. In the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement's 20-year life we have arranged around 4,000 same-sex marriages." Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement

NO "The law of the land does not recognise same-sex marriage and canon law does not recognise same-sex marriage. Such ceremonies have no canonical authority and fall outside the Church of England's understanding of marriage - which is the life long union of one man and one woman, mutually exclusive and indissoluble only by death." Rev Jonathan Jennings, Church of England spokesman. Interviews by Hannah Pool

7. \$1,000,000 for a picture. Of whom?

8. £2,500 for a watercolour. By whom?

9. "It allows you to accept the sex, violence, incest and murder in all their proper proportions." Who, defending their new four-hour movie?

10. "PB be back." Who vowed to return?

11. Which sportsman's career went downhill fast?

12. Who is pinning their hopes on late-eight erotica, but not until Good Friday at the earliest?

13. "I like to be dirty, I will be dirty." Who?

14. Who fell foul of the Vatican?

15. One politician released a rave record, the other a folk album. Who were they?

Answers on page 23

Going private at your expense

page 13 Clinic was established in 1832 refers to "the provision, gratuitously or otherwise, of hospital and clinic services for persons in need thereof". It is hard now not to read the words "gratuitously or otherwise" without layering them with irony.

The main factor that sets charitable hospitals apart from other private hospitals is that they do not distribute dividends or profits to shareholders. Senior staff and managers may still receive handsome salaries, but any surplus generated at the end of the year is retained and invested back into the hospital's work — back, that is, into providing services to private patients. Another requirement is that the institution should exist "for the relief of sickness" — a given in the case of any hospital.

The law places one other stipulation on charities. And that is that they should exist for the public benefit. Organisations which restrict their services to a limited group of people will generally be deemed ineligible. Yet the rule, so clear in theory, is in practice applied with double standards. A provident association like BUPA, which also does not pay dividends to shareholders, is not allowed to register as a charity as it restricts its services to members. Other private hospitals are called charities because they are supposedly open to all — and yet to use their facilities you have to have the money to pay.

Richard Fries, head of the Charity Commission which polices the sector, accepts that there are legitimate questions to be asked about the public benefit all this brings. "How broadly available to people do health services need to be to justify charitable status, with all that goes with it including tax relief?"

How available services are depends, surely, on the fees charged. In 1994, the average middle of the range daily rate charged in a BUPA hospital was £222. The average for non-religious charitable hospitals was higher, at £231. That would place them well out of



Let's be charitable... the London Clinic has fine doctors and the most modern equipment. But who is paying? PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID SALTJES

the reach of most people, let alone those on low incomes.

One way private hospitals manage to charge such high fees is by being able to offer top quality facilities. As charities they are not allowed to dish out profits, so instead they have been ploughing their surpluses back into the business. The circle is complete: facilities improve, so fees can go up. In many charitable hospitals, expansion and higher prices have advanced hand in hand.

programme, the 1994 accounts report on an elderly person's unit that appeared to be operating below par. The Care of the Elderly Centre in Redhill continued to operate in a difficult market. Demand for the services of the care centre and hence turnover grew somewhat during the year. However, it was not possible to improve margins at all. A fundamental review of the future of this facility is being undertaken.

Another statement of intent says: "We had hoped to achieve a surplus of £5 million plus, but the loss of income from those hospitals which were being refurbished, combined with the higher than expected pay award to nurses, effectively reduced our profits."

The Nuffield Hospitals are undoubtedly a financial success story. But in many private charitable hospitals, the need to reinvest surpluses by building new facilities is inefficient if not openly wasteful. Bed occupancy rates in the sector are now as low as 49 per cent.

The contrast with the NHS could not be starker. Beds in private hospitals increased by 73 per

cent between 1980 and 1994, while NHS beds fell by more than a third. The British Medical Association warned earlier this week that the NHS was heading for collapse.

MALCOLM Miller, chief executive of the London Clinic, claims that unlike many hospitals in the private sector which face great trouble in filling their beds, his hospital is often fully occupied, particularly during the week. He is proud of his record in ensuring that the clinic continues to maintain a steady surplus in the ceaseless pursuit of improved facilities for patient care. The clinic's marketing manager adds that the future lies in specialisation which is why, for example, the clinic does not provide care for chronically-ill older people.

In self-defence, charitable hospitals also point out that the bounds between private and NHS care are becoming increasingly blurred under the so-called internal market where health authorities and GP fundholders can buy



healthcare from the private sector. But they still have to contend with the argument that they are being unfairly supported with public money.

The threat of any change to the rules is as yet minimal, however. Even a Labour government would be unlikely to grapple with the issue, Chris Smith, the shadow health secretary, merely points out, rather blandly that "with new figures showing that NHS deficits are likely to be around £120 million by next April and complaints everywhere of cancelled operations and longer waiting lists, the Government's top priority should be patient care in the NHS, rather than in any other sector."

Private hospitals in Britain are subsidised in at least four different ways: their medical staff are largely trained by the NHS; their patients rely on the NHS to provide back-up emergency and intensive care facilities; the charitable hospitals are largely exempt from paying business rates; and the same hospitals pay no tax at all on the large annual surpluses they make. We can happily ignore such hidden subsidies if we like. But if

we do, they will inevitably drive a wedge between the two tiers of the healthcare system, just as they have done between public and private schools.

Back at the London Clinic, a tour of the quiet corridors reveals yet more wonders of modern medicine. "Over there," a hospital manager says, "is where they're doing a spinal fusion — very exciting stuff." On another floor is where you will find "absolutely the most famous guy on diabetes". And further along there is the voice clinic, in which broadcasters, museum guides and pop stars may benefit from the UK's first computer-integrated rhino-laryngeal stroboscope. Concerts may never have to be cancelled again.

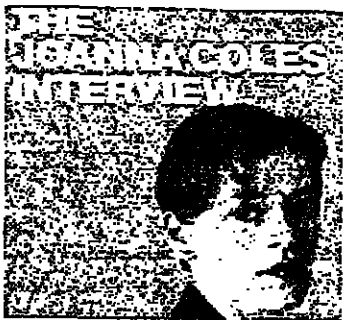
The tour will continue, around all such private hospitals, into the next century. Every year new departments will be opened and wonders will never cease. It really does look like great charity. Particularly to those who can afford it.

The Gift of Health, by Mark Lattimer, is published next month by the Directory of Social Change, tel. 0171-209 5151

Now sober
a survivor
first woman
Da
Wil
Ro
W
Old timers
logging up
the arteries of
government

Now sober but still jolly, Rosie Boycott is a survivor who this week becomes the first woman to edit a national broadsheet

Days of wine and Rosie



WHEN Rosie Boycott was 29 and deputy editor of Honey magazine, a friend called her, announced he was launching a new magazine in Cyprus and that he wanted her to be editor. "I arrived drunk in Cyprus on the Saturday and when they flew me back the following Saturday I was still drunk," she says grimly.

"I came to in the Red Cross room at Heathrow where a very nice nurse leaned over and told me I was in big trouble." So, after strenuous persuading from her father and boyfriend, she finally checked into a treatment centre and spent the next six weeks drying out. "There were nine of us, fellow patients in the same ward. I'm the only one still alive."

Now aged 45, Rosie Boycott is a survivor. You can see it in her face, you can hear it in her voice. It's an ideal quality with which to edit the Independent on Sunday, which some reckon may not survive much beyond the next election. She's the first woman to edit a broadsheet newspaper this century — an astonishing achievement — but she's not yet produced an issue and already the critics have started. She lacks experience, they grumble, she's only got the job for the female shock factor. In fact, Boycott has worked on both the Daily Mail and Telegraph. And during her four-year sojourn as editor on Equire, the men's magazine she led last Tuesday, she managed to more than double circulation.

"Nasty things happened when I was a drunk," she recalls quietly. "I can remember sitting up with my mum when she was ill and dying and I was so drunk I passed out. When I came to she was awake and watching me. And I remember thinking she could have died when I was like that and even that didn't stop me. It's a really scary illness."

Rosie Boycott can be pretty scary herself at times. It's partly her voice, as deep as Loch Ness, but there is also a toughness about her, a reluctance to suffer fools which surfaces sometimes on Start The Week, where she is by far the best and most demanding of Melvyn Bragg's regular guests.

The first time we met, four years ago, she was hosting a party at a minimal friend, and I found her intimidating and rather abrupt. Looking back, I was probably in awe of her reputation and guest list. But laddering out slices of beef and ham pie in the kitchen of her tall white Notting Hill house, she seemed wary on the edge of one of those humourless super-women, managing to edit a magazine while single-handedly bringing up a daughter and hosting parties for the literati, all in the best possible taste.

But as I came gradually to know her over the next few years, I realised I was wrong. As her copious friends and colleagues will testify, Boycott is warm, funny, good company, immensely capable and has the intoxicating quality of managing to get as merry as her guests, while drinking no alcohol at all.

"It was such a thrill when I finally stopped being drunk," she says, as we sit in her sunny dining room and she obligingly drags up her past for me to pore over. "You have a lot of scrapes when you drink and you feel lucky to have escaped." As she admits with a startling frankness, Boycott spent the first part of her life escaping. Escaping from her middle-class army background and the memories of Cheltenham Ladies College where she was bullied and "came back from class one day to discover the entire contents of my wardrobe hung on the fire-escape. Everyone was laughing and pointing because my clothes were all homemade," she shudders, stroking her dog, Bingo, a rescuee from Battersea Dogs Home. "Agonising."

Then it was escaping Kent University, where she spent just two terms reading maths before running off to go on marches and work on the underground press in London. Here she founded the feminist magazine Spare Rib, with Marsha Rowe, but "instinctively I didn't like collective editing". So two years later she was off again, this time to India and the Far East with John Steinbeck (son of the writer) where the couple were eventually thrown into a Thai jail for smoking dope.

"It was extremely frightening because you didn't know what was going to happen," she says briskly. "But I gave English lessons each morning and I was deeply into meditating at the time so it was also quite a spiritual experience." After their release, they ended up at Naropa, the Buddhist University of America, where Boycott promptly started editing the local newspaper. "I had an *honest* list of contributors from William Burroughs to Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso. The guru was a very complex individual, who was partially paralysed and incredibly drunk most of the time," she adds wryly. "It was an interesting time but not a very happy one."

AFTER splitting up with Steinbeck, she came back to England but promptly charged off again to edit a women's magazine in Kuwait. "I didn't want to be in England, I wanted to be away. I didn't like the mid-seventies, it wasn't interesting, I was running away again. I can see it with hindsight, I was always going through endless struggles to re-invent myself into someone I could live with."

"At Cheltenham I used to tell lies about where we'd been on holiday to make myself sound more interesting, and part of what I did in my twenties was to live a life so I never needed to tell a lie again."

"The sixties did two things. It made you think big and take risks, but it also made you despise the normal, and that is a great crime that no one's prepared to recognise."

As a result, she says, it took her a long time to enjoy ordinary things. "I got an incredible amount of satisfaction when I bought this house," she grins, looking around her at the red walls and old upright piano; next door, the kitchen is crammed with red and yellow cups and mugs, the dresser heaving with wooden carvings, little toys and postcards. "It's a nice thing other people do and I like it for all the right reasons." It took me a long time before I realised that I liked to go walking and skiing and riding, and reading books and banging out with my family. I despised all that for a long time."

After sobering up, Boycott married a journalist, David Leitch

(author of God Stand Up For Bastards) and produced Daisy, who now aged 13 can thrash her mother on the tennis court. Though her drunken days seem far behind her I wonder if she still fears drink? "You're always conscious of it. It doesn't frighten me because I know what to do. The really frightening time is when you're in denial about it. We all have friends like that." When she sees them sinking, does she interfere? "I try very hard to say something. If you can't say it you should, it's a very lonely, horrific thing and it happens to a lot more people than we ever acknowledge."

As part of her rehabilitation, she also wrote an autobiography, *A Nice Girl Like Me* (reissued by Pan next year). "I still get letters from people who have got it from the library and said it helped them and I think 'Great'." She also produced a novel. Would she like to have carried on writing? "No," she says emphatically. "I don't see myself as a writer, I don't pine to stay at home and write. I'm in awe of writers, they're the only thing I'm truly in awe of."

Which may go some way to explaining her notoriously fat contacts book. At Esquire, where she picked up the Editor of the Year Award two years running, in 1983 and 1984, she quickly set up the Esquire/Waterstone's Literary Award, which rapidly established itself as the most prestigious prize around for non-fiction. She also persuaded more established authors such as Erica Jong, Martha Gellhorn, Kingsley and Martin Amis, Tobias Wolff, Rian Malan and Ian McEwan to contribute.

She's on the board of the Hay-on-Wye literary festival and its director, Peter Florence, remarks that "Without doubt the thing which most excites Rosie is really good writing." So what, I wonder, does she most enjoy about editing? "Finding the right writer for the right story," she says before chanting, "Stories, stories, stories, writers, writers, writers."

At this point there is a noise at the front door and Bingo races off to greet Daisy, back from school. "Hi, my darling," calls Rosie and, as Daisy appears in her gym kit, "Oh, you've left your jumper behind again!" "I don't want my jumper," laughs Daisy.

"Do you want us to go upstairs out of your way?" "No it's OK," Daisy replies, rubbing Bingo and absently heading for the fridge.

How, I demand, will Boycott, as a single parent, cope working until late on a Saturday night? "We have a very effective network here," she says, nodding in the direction of Anna, the live-in nanny. "Daisy's dad is going to move in every Friday night and I'll have Sunday and Monday off. Besides, I have this huge, extended family. We have my ex-husband, who's like my best friend, his girlfriend, my stepdaughter from one of his liaisons, her boyfriend, my stepson, my daughter, my husband's first wife and her husband, my stepdaughter's mother and her father, nieces, nephews and two cousins who are like brothers and sisters." Grief, it sounds like a Woody Allen film.

"Oh we're on the phone the whole time, in and out, we have a network between us, we have dinners together where we have David, his first wife, current husband, mother of other one of his husbands, the children, her boyfriend, it's lovely, just terrific! I'm a single mother, OK, I'm a very privileged single mother," she says, suddenly changing tone. "But I have to say, I didn't respond very well to the Blair family photograph."

But she is a Labour supporter? "Of course! I was going to do a



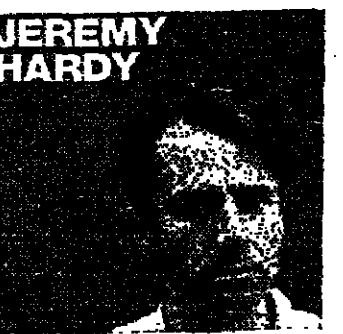
Rosie Boycott... 'I was going through endless struggles to re-invent myself into someone I could live with.' PHOTOGRAPH: EAMONN McCABE

'The sixties made you think big and take risks'

magazine with them, I'm very involved and I'm longing to see them in government. But I don't see what they're going to do hook, line and sinker, and I'm getting exasperated by the fence-sitting. "I think they should bite the bullet about taxing the rich more. I don't think people would object if they saw a result. I send my daughter to a fee-paying school, I would dearly love for the taxes that I pay not to have to send her to a fee-paying school but there's no way I'm sacrificing Daisy to the shit-heap of Tory education." I wonder if she'll maintain the

paper's new republican stance? "No, I'm not a republican. I mean no one's going to say the royal family right now are a good thing, but I'm not keen on republicanism. I can't see its value and I find it unbelievably boring." As she gets up to slip out of a meeting, I remember that Boycott doesn't walk, she bounces. She doesn't sit still either, she lists like a ship. Her energy seems to hover around her like a Ready Brek haze. Early in the morning, she can often be spotted peddling away at the local gym, and on Sunday mornings she can be seen in Ken-

sington Gardens, a member of the Notting Hill softball team, made up of writers and journalists. "Energy's interesting isn't it?" she remarks. "It goes round, you get it back from people, mine's like an electric motor." I wonder, if she ever gets depressed? "Yes." How does she cope? "I battle through. I have a lot of very good pals. I have seriously good pals." As I leave, I spin round and candidly that the first time we met, I found her terrifying, so forbidding. "Oh no," she grins. "I'm scared all the time myself. I fight lots of fears. I get *fantastically* scared!"



Old timers clogging up the arteries of government

HILLINGDON Hospital's rejection of elderly patients has highlighted what is seen by many as the most threatening ailment in our society. It seems that the trouble with us today is that we're all living too long. It's no fault of the Government. It's our fault.

Whereas we used to die, broken, diseased and exhausted, at around 40, now we think we can just go on and on. And we're not prepared to hobble around in pain muttering "mum's grumbles", we're all demanding pain-killers, plastic joints, even heart surgery. The whole point of being old is that you're on the way out, you're not a long term investment. And yet, unproductive people, who by their very nature are outdated, place increasing demands on the state.

Apparently, human beings have a limitless desire to go into hospital. Given a moment's leisure, we're all haranguing our GP, insisting that we need some opera-

tion or other. And fair play to the Government; more of us are being hospitalised than ever before. The Tories have helped to provide more of us with malnutrition, tuberculosis, stress, depression and industrial injury. But even this revival of sickness is not wiping us out in the way that might be expected. More and more of us are surviving retirement. And rather than celebrating greater life expectancy, we're always discussing it. Whenever pensions are discussed, we are told that our insistence on not expiring in an orderly fashion means that we must accept the gradual dismantling of the welfare state. Dark predictions are made about our nation's grey future. I am surprised that no scientist has yet started to make dire forecasts about the geographical implications of our ageing population. Surely, as more and more people are retired to the seaside, the edges of Britain will bend downwards, forcing the Midlands thousands of

feet above sea-level. The one consolation is that Wolverhampton will be made less accessible. One would have thought that attitudes to age would have progressed faster than they have, given that we can all look forward to being older for longer. The re-emergence of Barbara Castle as a pensioners' champion was quite telling. Regardless of what she is saying, she is marvellous for her age.

We seem to reverse the fact that people over 70 are able to do anything at all. When Lady Castle mounted that podium few of us were really listening to her proposals or comparing them to Frank Field's. Some of us were pleased to see a person of any age acting as a spanner in the works of the Blair machine, but what united the nation was a sense of wonder that a person can look so old and have such vitality. The same is true of Mick Jagger although he's only 53. But because she looked so frail,

the party establishment felt quite comfortable with Lady Castle's attack. The opinions of the old are benignly disregarded in the same way as those of the young. We start out exuberant and finish up cranky, and in neither case are we

Even this revival of sickness is not wiping us out in the way that might be expected. More of us are surviving retirement

considered rational. Experience will knock the stuffing out of the young, and death will silence the old. But everyone admires their spirit. In between youth and old age we may be lucky enough to be consid-

ered productive members of society and thereby entitled to be heard. But during this time — during our working lives — we're supposed to dedicate ourselves to making our children as employable as possible and preparing ourselves to die with dignity, that is, with a private pension.

The financial institutions put enormous resources into advertisements depicting nicely dressed, sprightly, self-supporting oldies with good dentures, cherishing fine collections of those ornaments you can order from Sunday supplements and maybe even enjoying the cruise of a lifetime — one last fling before a well provided funeral. But for the feckless who live on their incomes as they earn them, there will be no no stair-lift, no toilets for devoted grandchildren. Probably no devoted grandchildren at all, just grandchildren resentful that Gran's come to live with them. In pension advertising, the prudent saver is equated with the

squirrel, an unfortunate role model for anyone who hopes not to spend their autumn years going through bins and hopping naked through the park. But all this crass imagery successfully gnaws away at one's confidence in the future, especially when combined with political initiatives to move further from state provision.

As for Hillingdon, I don't suppose anyone intended any offence to those over 76, but such a decision cannot fail to humiliate. This is not to say that one should cast the lot in the role of victim. The image of frightened, lonely, confused old folk who are constantly being nudged probably gets rather irritating for the over-seventies. All a pensioner wants is the same rights as everybody else. And only when we equate human rights with human needs shall we start to become anything like a civilised society. So, yes, we do place difficult demands on the state, and so we should. It is ours.

PERSONALLY I think there's something odd about a woman wanting to have a baby by her dead husband — a living equivalent of the memorial park bench — but I don't think any reasonable person would deny her right to do it.



Why lawyers are making a watertight case for privatisation

Except the law. What's really upsetting is that Mrs Blood has had to find £30,000 of her own money to obtain this injustice. Fifty grand! There are parts of this country where you can still buy a perfectly good house for that. You could even ask 50 Commons questions.

ernment is forever telling us how gas and phone calls are now much cheaper. Given that justice is every bit as important, yet seems only faintly less random than the Lottery, shouldn't it have its prices slashed too?

I can't think of one similarity between Paul Gascoigne and TS Eliot. Yet both pose us a moral dilemma

each mouthful. But our greengrocer gives the kids a free sweet if we go in for a pound of potatoes and he doesn't slather us with ad man's guff about choice festive Christmas feasting, either.

warming frenzy which continues to grip at least some scientists? Of course not. Global warming has become an article of faith, almost a cult, and true believers will believe in it even if we enter a new Ice Age. They are like the fundamentalists who interpret earthquakes and famines as signs of God's goodness and mercy.

doesn't mean that OMOV is wrong. It just proves what my cynics have always known, that even the purest democracy is endemicallly corrupt.

TRY as I might, I can't think of one similarity between Paul Gascoigne and TS Eliot. Yet both pose us a moral dilemma. Does Gazza's wonderful goal in Euro 96 excuse the appalling way he has beaten up his wife? Of course not. Any more than The Waste Land, the greatest poem of the century, neutralises Eliot's saloon bar anti-Semitism. So, do we now ignore the goal and tear up the poem? Or mentally separate the man from his gifts, as if he were merely a flawed carrier of an exquisite talent? I really do not know the answer.

DAVID Mellor is the most articulate Tory advocate of a total ban on handguns. Yet he earns a six-figure sum every year as a director of several companies whose products rain death upon whole populations. It seems a curious position. To misquote Woody Allen ("in our family, the greatest sin was to buy retail"), Mr Mellor apparently believes that the greatest sin is to die retail.



SMALLWEED

A LETTER from Westcott complains that my references last week to Nostalgie de la Boue was incomprehensible. I find this extraordinary. Have people already forgotten this rawboned, elfin chanteuse who took Paris by storm in the heyday of Mitterrand? Whose affairs, adventures and amorous escapades were the talk of the Deux Magots and the Café Flore, involving as they were reputed to be such diverse paragonisms as Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Jean Gabin, Jean Sahlon, Arletty, Henry Miller, Anatole France, Edith Piaf, the Marquis de Vauvenargues, and the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand (before his deplorable assassination)? Can it be that we've ceased to celebrate the belle of Montmartre and Montparnasse, Denfert-Rochereau, and all stations to Marie d'Ivry? Does nobody now invoke the lambent lines of Apollinaire, who wrote of Nostalgie... A pedant interjects: What the deuce is all this about? Nostalgie de la boue means, literally, nostalgia for the mud, and was used — though more by the English than by the French themselves — to describe the condition of those who like to hark wistfully back to days of struggle and poverty. Andrew Neil, for instance. Smallweed wearily ripostes: Very well, have it your own way.

Born to rule over us

As Parliament reopens next week, what is to be done with all those crusty old hereditary peers? Send 'em packing, says Labour's Baroness Blackstone. You'll regret it if you do, ripostes the seventh Earl of Onslow

Dear Tessa,

TO DEFEND in the Guardian the hereditary peerage, is akin to leaving Leonidas at Thermopylas with no Spartans and you, dear Tessa, make a fine Darius. The abolition, "is nothing to do with democracy, all to do with power."

such as Lords Melchett and Cranbrook; or 25-year-old Lord Freyburg; or Lady Mar, an ex-civil service clerk of ancient Scottish lineage who badgers the Government on organo-phosphates. Neither she nor Freyburg are professional politicians, but they enrich public life. All life peers feel beholden to the abolition, that empowers them. By contrast, my debt to Pitt has long been paid. Though I take the Conservative Whip, I voted for a referendum on Maastricht and Lord Chelwood's referendum on poll tax.



Dear Michael,

YOUR case for leaving the House of Lords as it rests on the fact that it works and to meddle with it would therefore be foolish. Unfortunately it does not work very well and could work better if reformed.

been whipped in. This brings the House into disrepute as a revising chamber where a more even balance between the parties is needed in order to act as a proper check on the Government. Yours sincerely, Tessa, Baroness Blackstone

I agree with you, it must be reformed, but properly reformed. I want its composition thought out and its powers re-defined. Until then, the hereditary peerage has a valuable and original contribution to make. Yours sincerely, Michael

would be just another quango. The Lords already is a quango. Every member is there as a result of preferment across several generations. It is surely better to appoint people on the basis of what they have achieved than because they are descended from successful illegal immigrants in the shape of Norman barons. Yours sincerely, Tessa

Dear Tessa,

CONSERVATIVE governments do take defeats in the Lords more seriously than did a Labour government. I know. I heard Margaret Thatcher's reaction. You do not want to abolish us for any other reason than power. You accept heredity as essential in one part of a crime parliament but say it is wrong in another even though it has been there since parliament began. Tradition should not be lightly cast aside. As a hereditary peer I was brought up to believe I was part of tradition and that I was very privileged, so in return I owed society a duty. That may sound old-fashioned but it is the attitude of most of the hereditary peerage. Good traditions should continue. It would, after all, be a betrayal if the Guardian became the Daily Telegraph. If you were to reform the Lords in line with its traditional make-up I would have sympathy — reform that went back to the origins of parliament in so far as the Queen's government needed the advice and consent of the powerful, out in the open. What is wrong with the present body politics is the assumption of all-executive power by the Prime Minister, little checked by the House of Commons whose members are not allowed to think by the whips, even less by the Lords whose members think but are not listened to. A reformed Lords would return balance to our government. Your jejune proposal of an armine-clad quango goes no way towards that desirable end. If anything, it makes the executive power stronger. Yours sincerely, Michael

Dear Michael,

YOU SAY that I only want to abolish hereditary peers to obtain power. Yet I am surprised that someone as fair-minded as you finds the huge inbuilt Conservative majority in the Lords acceptable. Traditions are important but so is change to meet new circumstances. Because hereditary peers have sat in the Lords for centuries does not mean they should do so forever. I accept that you have a sense of duty. However, no cricket team, orchestra or school governing body would recruit people just because their fathers had been members; nor should the Upper House. You imply that you want to keep hereditary peers and give the Lords more power as a check on the executive. Do you think this would be acceptable to the electorate or to the House of Commons? Reform should include new ways of appointing members, in which nominations could be made by a wide range of public bodies, possibly with a small committee of privy councillors playing a part. The Conservative Leader in the Lords might perhaps nominate a small number of existing hereditary peers? As for ermine, once the hereditary peers have gone, it can easily be discarded. Over-ambitious reforms failed in the past. Next time it will be better to proceed in stages towards the goal of a largely elected chamber. Yours sincerely, Tessa

WHICH brings me back to Ann Widdecombe, who

have heard without a surge of emotion the newsless on Today in which she spoke of her hopes for those imprisoned in boot camp? The minister had been hustled in to the studios because of a story in the rightwing press which complained that someone in one of these camps was seen smiling. Weren't these places supposed to be offering the inmates? Indeed, said the minister. For the first few days the feet of incumbents scarcely touched the ground as the institutions schooled them in the structure and discipline they had been missing. But then, as they accustomed themselves, their eyes were directed to wider horizons. They were trained in the skills the lack of which had landed them in their present horrid predicament. Above all, they were schooled in Right Attitudes. What a wicked waste, supporters must feel, that a candidate with this enlightened twin-track approach was denied the managership of Manchester City.

TIME TO GRASP the nettle!

The Times thundered this week in some context or other. Why on earth in this day and age (© Museum of British Clutché 1996) do people use language like that? Have you ever heard the person next to you in the pub declare to a neighbour: "Tommy, old fruit, it's time we got round to some grasping in any case, would anyone with a smidgin of sense ever grasp a nettle? Take a pair of scissors to it, perhaps, or a sycote or a machete; but not grasp it. Are people who at odious risk to themselves persist in grasping nettles in any position to offer worthwhile advice to Her Majesty's ministers?"

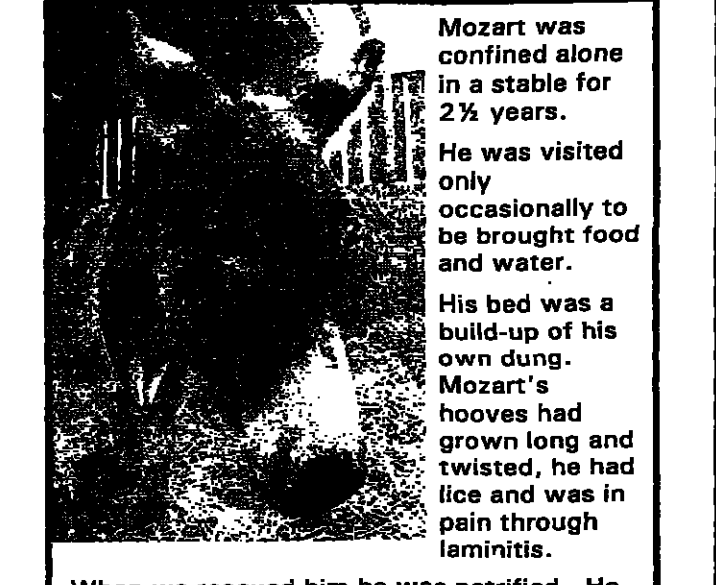
THE FOUR SCREENS of Smallweed's nearest Odeon

are offering attractions called "Jack", "Jude" and "Emma". Emma's the Jane Austen novel about a girl with a graceful neck. Jude is Jude the Obscure, a title apparently deemed too obscure for cinema-goers. Jack is something with Robin Williams which many reviewers disliked. Coming shortly to your coruscating multiplex: "Edna", "Vernon", and "Trev". I suppose these short sharp titles represent a revision against such rambling names as The Englishman Who Climbed Up a Hill, Stammered Winningly At A Game of Villagers, and Came Down a Mountain, starring Hugh Grant. Even so, I distrust them. Had these practices applied in the past, Gone with the Wind would have been known as "Scarlett"; Dr Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb, as "Pip"; and Great Expectations as "Pip".

THANK GOODNESS then, for

The Wind in the Willows, also playing next week, which might easily in the present climate have come on the market as "Toad!" Even more gratifying to find the manager offering two free tickets through our local free sheet. All you have to do to qualify is to answer three questions, the first of which asks who wrote the books (a) Kenneth Grahame; (b) Graham Greene; or (c) Kenneth Williams? Most people will tick Kenneth Grahame, but is it really so simple? The more you think of the story of Rat, Mole and Badger, the more it seems to belong in the heart of Greeneland. The devious journey which Mole undertakes in the hope of finding his home, what is this but a moving allegory for that classic Greene condition, the hunger for a lost faith? Note also the sexual undertones in a book from which its supposed author claimed to be "clean of the clasp of sex". The concern with the celibate life, perhaps even the mild hint of homo-eroticism, are pure Graham Greene. So is the fascination with the underclass. Why does decent, civilised Badger insist on making his home in the heart of the seething and dangerous Wild Wood, unless it is because he's infected with the characteristic taste of Greene's heroes for the world of the louche and disreputable? Next week — Toad as Washerwoman: the Apothecists of Camp?

PLEASE HELP A LITTLE DONKEY IN DISTRESS



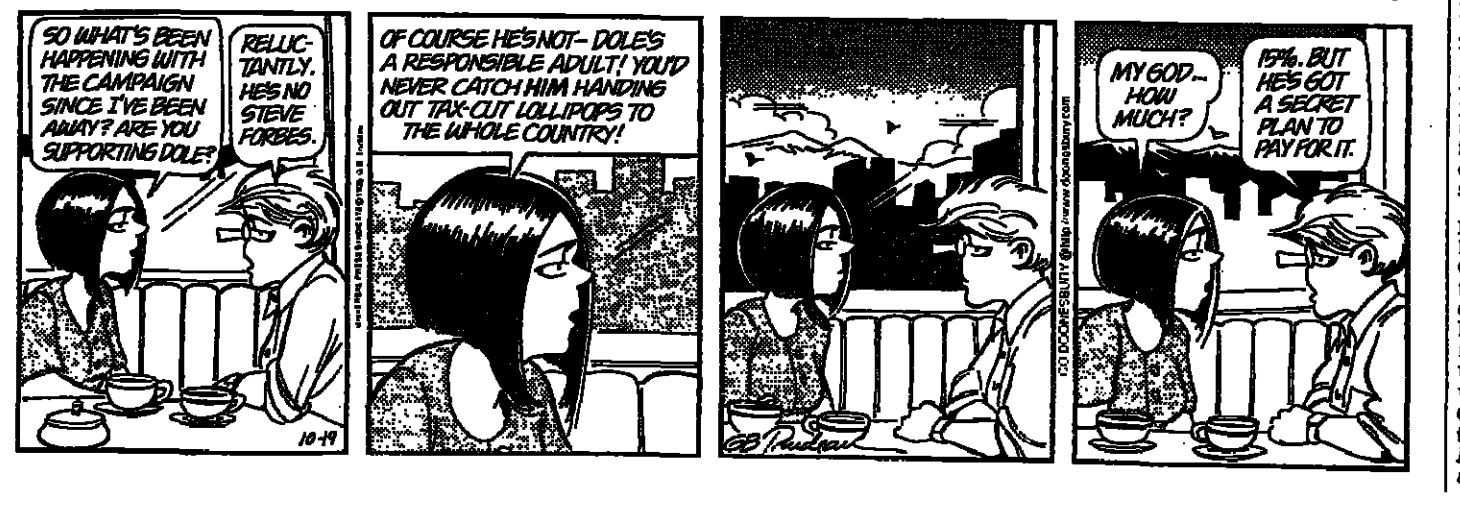
Mozart was confined alone in a stable for 2½ years. He was visited only occasionally by his mother and brought food and water. His bed was a build-up of his own dung. Mozart's hooves had grown long and twisted, he had lice and was in pain through laminitis.

When we rescued him he was petrified. He would quiver at the back of his new stable when approached. When the door was opened it took many days before Mozart would venture out and he was just as frightened of donkeys as he was of people. Gradually, with patience and kindness, Mozart is beginning to trust again. He is 25 years old and can now spend his retirement years in contentment. Please can you help us to care for Mozart and donkeys like him.

Please Help Us To Help Them

Please send donations to: The Donkey Sanctuary, (Dept), Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 0NU. Tel: (01395) 578222. Enquiries to Dr E. D. Svendsen, M.B.E. Reg. Charity No. 264818. Enclose Cheque/Postal Order for £. Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss Address Post Code

Doonesbury



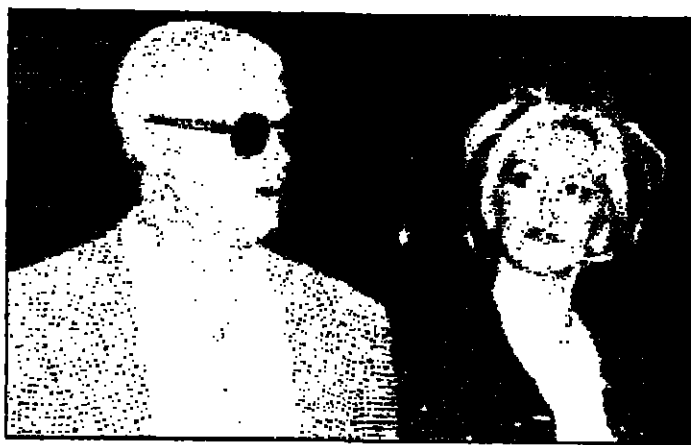
BY GARRY TRUDEAU

Pitch battle ends with woman carried off on a stretcher

Gazza beats up Shezza and the sports world turns a blind eye. Julie Burchill on men who treat women like footballs

THE Worldwatch Bureau of Washington, a centre concerned with, if you will, the monitoring of evil in all shapes and forms across the planet, recently came to the conclusion that, above all, one group of people were sinned against more than any other in the world. And they weren't the poor, they weren't black, they weren't children.

They were, of course, women. In every country, under every system. This is why I find that the best answer to the question "Are you a feminist?" is invariably, "Yes, I do watch the six o'clock television news each day!" But somehow — probably because men cannot face up to the unique scumminess that involves physically hurting someone weaker than you are, and therefore must think up all sorts of imagined collusions and complexities and religious tenets to make sense of such acts — violence against women has become a "Yes, but..." issue. Look at the case of the Taliban in Afghanistan; as the only British journalist to consistently back the attempted



Soviet civilization of this wretched country, I for one have no qualms in doing so. The Taliban, since their arrival, have oppressed, abused and attacked women. "Yes, but..." — they've "brought stability", "made the tanks run on time" and so on. As if that mattered when more than half the population are being enslaved! In some quarters, the fact that men were being forced to grow beards seemed to be considered more of an abuse of human rights than the fact that women

Married to the enemy... Paul Gascoigne and his wife, the long-suffering Sheryl

become, that Eric Cantona's childish and psychotic attack on a fan was justified by the man's "racism" — ie, pointing out that Cantona was French. I wouldn't like to be French because they are such a deeply racist people, but being correctly identified as a Frenchman can hardly be called an insult.

If Eric Cantona had kicked a black Englishman who called him a Frenchman, he would have been run out of town — on the EuroStar, probably. And if Paul Gascoigne had said — just said, "Sometimes I feel like attacking a black man, in the process of which I would inflict on him severe bruising to the face, neck and arms, three dislocated fingers and his arm in a sling", it is a fair bet to say he would never be allowed to play professional football again.

Yet when he actually does this, to his own wife, in a drunken fit of evil temper, while her two children and his own eight-month-old son cowers in the next hotel room, his club vice-chairman Donald Findlay, a QC, can say: "Let he who has

never had a bust-up with his wife cast the first stone. We are not going to interfere. This is entirely a private matter."

Why is a racist attack condemned as a shameful disgrace — even on a man who is the equal physical match of his attacker — while an attack on a much weaker woman is considered to be a "Yes, but..."? Why do sportsmen, especially — OJ Simpson, Mike Tyson, Gascoigne — consider violence against women so acceptable? And why are their fans so eager to forgive and justify it?

IT IS a fact that many women will confirm that men who are over-interested in sport — boxing and football especially — are crap at sex; this may be a cause, effect or your good old chicken and egg situation — I do not know.

This being a free society, they know that the women they sleep with have slept with other men — among them, men who are dead good in bed. (In London, in the early nineties, at the height of New Laddism and football craziness, it was well known among the single girls on the media scene that the only man worth getting horizontal with at

the Groncho Club was a young critic called Tom. You knew Tom was brilliant in bed because the minute the talk turned to matters sport, Tom would yawn, down his vodka-tini and say loudly, "God I hate sport! Especially football! Why would anybody bother once they'd left school?")

And no man can stand the idea that a woman prefers someone else sexually to him; it makes him see red. When Simpson, Tyson or Gascoigne slap, rape or attack a woman who has rejected them, they do it for their fans as well — as surely as they land that punch or score that goal. Sport has become a continuation of the sex war for men who are not man enough to see a woman stand on her feet without the burning desire to knock her on to her knees. They are sad but suitable icons for a lost generation of men who have refused to learn either the best things their fathers could have taught them or the best things feminism could have taught them. And as we thirty-something women flounce off with our girlfriends, our sugar daddies or our young boyfriends, we wish the whole sad sorry bunch of them much joy.

So what's your poison?

We are what we eat, but what we eat is increasingly packed with toxins.

John Vidal lunches with a Frenchman who has charted his country's fall from grace and finds things here equally indigestible

EAT FRESH FISH. Drink good wine. Up with us anchor and sail round the world. When you are 40, you can "go fishing". Now?

M Gerard Pouradier, 40, is as expansive as any French wine-lover in mid-Sancerre.

He has written a best-seller that like the list of the French food and drink industry, he has been eating mullet in Madcowland and now, spinnaker set for a bibulous afternoon, he's in the Terrace restaurant of Le Meridien Hotel in Piccadilly. He is contemplating spoils and dry flies when an catastrophe occurs.

An English fly is swimming in M Pouradier's wine. He watches it. Clearly the fly is a metaphor for the myriad toxins that he says are now in the bloodstream of the world's premier food-producing country. This, he intimates, looking at his polluted liquid, is what is happening to French water, to French croissants and cheeses, hams and spinaches. It's like finding propyl, octyl and dodecyl galate all together in a baguette. An aberration of nature.

"It is a good wine, yes? Even your flies like it?" A new bottle arrives.

But how good is French food and wine? Pouradier, an investigative journalist, has been sniffing around farms, abattoirs, vineyards and food-processing plants. The noble rot, he concludes after years of research, has sunk low. In 1994, of 3,733 wine-making establishments inspected by the French fraud squad, 1,890 were issued with warnings and hundreds were charged with offences ranging from falsification to misleading publicity, unauthorised blending, deception and illegal irrigation.

The situation is worse than anyone thinks. Do we English know that in certain parts of France wine growers have stopped using vine shoots to knock flies because they are now so heavily impregnated with insecticides and other toxic chemicals that there is a serious risk of being poisoned? And do we know that there's been a huge trade in fake Chateaufort du Pape produced by discoloring red wine? Or that some wine is pasteurised so it can travel further, that cloned vines need more fertilisation so people are using desferriation and vacuum, even adding glycerol?

Pouradier drains his glass. Now he's conspiratorial. "Some wine growers are like the sorcerer's apprentice", he says. "In the Champagne region, wine-makers have been supplied by a certain town with special industrial sludge ostensibly to enrich and stabilise the soil. The mutant wine is here."

has collected facts from many sources and is spinning a terrible story of compliant consumers being walked over by a ruthless, ever more intensive industry in whose kitchens professors of chemistry are even now concocting cocktails of additives, colourants, preservatives, flavourings, hormones, odourants. Consumers, he says, are getting next to no information.

It occurs that Pouradier could be a MAF agent, so virulent is his cynicism of his countrymen. He documents mad, ignorant farmers overspraying toxics, hormone-treated animals, secret laboratories turning out new anabolic steroids which are trafficked like hard drugs in deals of a few grams in secret rendezvous. Last year 200 people in one humour, is how M Pouradier writes for best effect: EURO AGRO SLEAZE SHOCK HORROR SCANDAL. An increasingly secretive industry is in league with agro chemical giants, Eurocrats and politicians. Their machinations are now a matter of national security.

But there's more: the real danger is in what we do with mass-produced foods, which he believes are killing thousands of people a year and slowly poisoning millions.

"Did you know that the toxic anti-oxidants that go into potato flakes and chewing gum collect heavy metals and are made of petroleum?" "No."

"That scientists are already blathering about individual 'counters', like Geiger counters, that will allow each of us to calculate our own daily contamination level?" "No."

THE FOOD industry in France "it is the same here in Madcowland, my English friend" — is now running so fast and loose with its chemicals, its additives and its new gene manipulation and ingredients that it is impossible for the authorities even to monitor it properly.

So what would Pouradier — a man who loves his food, loves spending four hours on a meal — recommend to eat?

"Fish and rice. But take care of the water." The waitress says she would



Illustrations by MATTHEW RICHARDSON

haven't had a day off in months. No I don't.

POURADIER: Are you happy to believe your government on food?

CHEF: No.

POURADIER: Do you believe the supermarkets?

CHEF: That depends. Any industry will distort the facts.

POURADIER: So who do you believe?

CHEF: I phone my father. I talked to him about BSE. He's a marine biologist. He's very cynical.

POURADIER: If you are not cynical, you are stupid. There are now two systems of food for health. If you are rich you come here, and you take care of yourself. If you are poor you go to the supermarket.

CHEF: What I find is that the food I am delivered is sometimes not as good as in the supermarkets.

CHEF: has just been told he can serve British beef again after a six-month break. M Pouradier has made hay with the BSE crisis, which has helped sell his book. So far, he says, one Frenchman has officially (and five unofficially) died of CJD, at least 30 *boches* are confirmed. *Filles et mortis*, several herds have been slaughtered, and there's mounting evidence that the French, too, have been giving cheap and dodgy English-style feed to their cows.

So is there a French cover-up? Pouradier, who says BSE is a disaster in France and that beef sales are down 40 per cent, is enigmatic: "When the nuclear cloud came from Chernobyl, it officially stopped at the French border. I have no confidence in the authorities".

Does he see more BSE? "Of course."

CHEF: And what is the next really big food scare? What should we really fear? Say in 20 years' time?

POURADIER: My worst fear is that within five or six years there will be a real lack of pure water.

A BOTTLE of Chateau Lyonnat Lussac-St Emilion later and it occurs that the food industry, the chemical industry, the farmers, the government, even the press would love to dismiss Pouradier as a scare-monger. Hasn't he put together a lot of random facts without supporting scientific arguments? Is he not just profiting from the weekly food crisis? Where are his references, the names?

Everything, he says, is proved and documented. He has sources in industry, government, companies. People just do not want to hear the message, and to rectify the problem would mean raising most of France (and Britain).

Much is on the record anyway. The 1994 report of the French Department of Consumption, Competition and the Suppression of Fraud was devastating: more than 60 per cent of supermarket ham contained unauthorised additives, or permitted ones in excessive quantities; 58 per cent of processed meats do not conform to regulations and 30 per cent of French cheeses contain illegal substances.

The mind boggles. Pouradier pounces on an innocent-looking paper package of a low-calorie sugar sweetener, "Look", he says triumphantly. "It is made with phenylalanine. It makes you crazy. In France it is a big political scandal. What is it? A paint stripper?"

But by this time the bottles are empty, the words slower. The anchor must come up. Across London, the head of a multi-billion pounds a year food company selling Zimbabwean farmers, charities and food groups that organic foods made without chemicals are "totally irrelevant" for feeding the world; the Consumers' Association is reporting that half the British supermarket chickens it has inspected are unfit for human consumption; and now a magazine reports that many soft drinks are dangerously full of chemicals.

POURADIER: We know there are no illusions any more. And with that he sets sail for France.

The Rubbish On Our Plates, by Fabien Perrucca and Gerard Pouradier, is published by Pylon Books at £9.99

MENU

CROISSANT
Lecithin E322 • Antioxidant E500 • Mono- and di-glycerides of fatty acids Animal Fats • Emulsifier E472 • Butylated Hydroxyanisole

BEEF
Anabolic Steroids • Hormones • Anti Parasitics • Anti Bacterials • Dimethylhydroxytartrone

PROCESSED HAM
Polyphosphates • Nitrates • Rhythrosocin • Preservatives • Texturing proteins • Natural Resin Carob Flour •

FRANKFURTER
Blood plasma • Powdered latex • Artificial spices • Mechanically separated meat • Soya • Powdered egg whites • Fats • Colourings • Flavourings

SPRING WATER
WITH A HINT OF PEUR
Water • Acidifier • Flavouring Agent • Artificial Sweeteners • Preservatives • Colourings

recommend everything on the menu except the Caesar Salad and the (spiced lamb) stew. So what's the provenance of the salmon, which comes with bacon, capers, and watercress? She goes to the kitchens: The press is from France, the fish from Norway, the capers are Greek and the bacon Danish. She's from Austria and about the only native English thing in the restaurant is her wage: "It is very small", she says. Like a pea? Un petit pea.

ENTER LE CHEF — young, English, trained at the Ritz and interested in oriental foods. In the ensuing round-table discussion of food quality, which engages waitresses and passers-by, it emerges that he would not like the idea of limiting his menus to root vegetables and potatoes. He is not about to go organic. He regrets that he cannot afford to put wild salmon on the menu.

POURADIER: Do you talk about food quality and chemicals? **CHEF:** To be absolutely honest, no, I work here 16 hours a day. I

Shift

Having 'practically collapsed' in the studio, the world's second-biggest band have postponed the release of their new album. The accountants are worried, as are the shareholders. **Brian Boyd** reports on...

The trouble with U2



such as Tricky, Fortishead and Massive Attack brought to prominence last year. "The band are nervous about the trip-hop sound on the album," says the insider, "and there's been a lot of talk about going on with that sound." U2 have recorded about 20 new songs for the album, provisionally titled *Expect Nothing But The Best*. The first single of the album, *Discotheque*, is to be released at the beginning of February. With no shortage of songs, the album's delay, apart from the switch in musical styles, is also being attributed to the band's "fantastically indecisive nature" — they're quite capable of sitting around for four days wondering about it all and then recording on the fifth day.

The band are committed to touring the new album and indications are that they are determined to top 1995's extravagant *Zooropa* road show with one of the largest rock tours ever undertaken. They've already hired the services of Michael Kohl, a Canadian promoter who was behind the Rolling Stones 1994 *Steel Wheels* tour, the highest grossing rock tour ever.

Despite U2's wealth, money is an issue. The *Zooropa* tour, despite selling out in almost every venue it played, only broke even (at best) due to the huge production costs involved. Perhaps inevitably the issue of sponsorship, not U2's favourite word, has now raised its alarming head.

U2's manager, Paul McGuinness has criticised Michael Jackson, Paul McCartney and The Who for accepting corporate sponsorship for their tours. But speaking to the *Guardian* this week, McGuinness said "people know my feelings about... band... using inappropriate sponsorship on their tours, the sort of sponsorship that demeans the artist and is without any sense of dignity. We are currently being approached by a number of information technology companies and considering our options. In the past we've never had any problem with instrument manufacturers like Yamaha. Our problem is with branded consumer goods." It is believed that U2 would need something like \$100-million in sponsorship revenue for the tour, and names that have been mentioned, but not confirmed, include AT&T and Apple Computers. The Disney corporation have already been turned down.

Speaking about the band's record company and the new album, McGuinness said: "Between PolyGram and us is Island, and Island are as independent as a wholly owned subsidiary can be. I believe PolyGram respect the creativity of the band. The problem with the delay in the album is that forecasts are made and expectations generated. PolyGram have to acknowledge that the creative process is imprecise. The new album is a complex musical effort, it takes time."

In the past U2 have proved themselves to be musically flexible. As they work on the new album, they know that anything less than a consolidation of their pre-eminent position will be considered a failure and, as the provisional title suggests, that nothing but the best is expected. By the fans and the accountants.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTON CORSELMAN

Close to The Edge... U2 'are nervous about the trip-hop sound on the new album', says an insider

AT A PolyGram sales meeting in Hong Kong not so long ago, the suits looked sober: the record company end of the multinational was not having a great year. Its "products" (albums) had not been shifting too many "units" (sales). But, hey, no worries. The band that always brings a smile to the accountants' faces, U2, were to release their new album in November — just in time for the Christmas market.

Cut to Dublin, a few months on, where, hunched over a production desk, Bono, The Edge, Adam Clayton and Larry Mullen dub, overdub, mix and remix the album that will see them slugging it out with cheeky young Britpopers and spaced-out trip-hoppers for the heavyweight title of the musical world. How are they looking? "Exhausted," says an insider. "They went for broke over the summer trying to meet the November deadline for the album. Having practically collapsed, they took a week off and decided to hold it back until next March." If the fans are disappointed, spare a thought for the poor accountants at PolyGram (owners of Island, U2's record label). That's an estimated \$30 million that won't make it into their 1996 books.

Down in another part of the country, another four rock musicians, The Cranberries, are sitting in singer Dolores O'Riordan's house. The band, who had previously cut short a US tour due to the singer's poor health, have just announced that they're scrapping their upcoming three-month European tour and taking time out for the foreseeable future, due to O'Riordan's frailty and alarming loss of weight. The Cranberries are Ireland's second biggest rock band after U2, and they too are signed to PolyGram, via Island. Hold the conspiracy theory and pass the balance sheet.

It's no secret that PolyGram desperately wanted the U2 album out in November — almost as many albums are sold in the last quarter of the year than in the other nine months put together. The fact that U2 are going about recording their new album with apparently no concern for the state of the PolyGram share price says a lot about how the industry has changed since the feudal days of the sixties, when record companies demanded product, and demanded it now.

In the bad old days, even if your surname was McCartney or Jagger, you were supposed to have the good grace to keep the product churning out at regular intervals. Now the "creatives", it seems, have taken over the boardroom, and, armed with their independent teams of managers, consultants and lawyers, the biggest and best — U2 and their friendly rivals R.E.M. — are refusing to record on demand and to spend years on the road touring. The more audacious ones are even seeking to control their copyright, which is something The Beatles never asked for.

R.E.M. sold in the region of 15 million copies of their albums *Out Of Time* and *Automatic For The People*, becoming one of the biggest earners for their record company, Warner. Last month, they were reputed to have signed a new \$80-million deal with the company — just as the last album under their old contract failed to reach number one in the US charts and suffered falling sales each week since. It's now three-and-a-half years since U2's last album, *Zooropa* (consider the career-end-

ing five-year break The Stone Roses took between albums) and, uniquely for them, *Zooropa* was the first that failed to outsell its predecessor, *Achtung Baby* (1991) shifted 10 million copies worldwide, to *Zooropa*'s 7.8 million.

To understand where U2 are today it's important to know where they are coming from. They are "different", as the people who have worked closely with them over the years put it. They have been together for nearly 20 years, thanks to their close friendship that goes back to schooldays, and thanks also to the fact that they successfully negotiated their way through the money problems that break many a band up once success comes a-calling. U2 have a curious financial arrangement — despite the fact that Bono writes most of the lyrics and guitarist The Edge writes most of the music, all royalties are split five ways between the four band mem-

bers and their manager Paul McGuinness. "It's a very generous arrangement, given the amount of money involved, and one of the reasons why they've had no major personal problems over the years," says a source close to the band. They each have personal fortunes of \$75 million — amassed through a larger than average royalty deal on their albums.

Because their success and fame was built up over a long period of time — they didn't break the American market until their fifth album, *The Joshua Tree* (1987) — they have never suffered from the type of celebrity psychosis that has put the skids on many other bands' careers. Interesting to note that The Cranberries, the only other Irish rock band who come anywhere near them in terms of sales, broke America with their debut album and had some fling at them from a great height. The Cranberries never had the same

gestation period U2 had. Their second album sold more than 10 million copies, the band embarked on a year-long world tour, took a few weeks off, recorded their third album in three weeks and then went out on an 18-month world tour. Little surprise that Dolores O'Riordan's current illness, which is believed to be stress-related, has knocked the band out of action for an indeterminate period of time. More bad news for the PolyGram accountants.

The delay on U2's album, according to insiders, is down to the fact that they "have always been musically ambitious and they like to change their sound. When you have been the biggest and the best band in the world and you want to change your sound, it's a very fraught business, there is pressure on." U2 have made significant changes in their musical direction over the years. From the traditional guitar, bass and drum

sound that dominated their early career and threatened to calcify when they became a stadium rock band (the Simple Minds syndrome) they made a vertical change in direction with the release of *Achtung Baby* in 1991, embracing dance culture, introducing hip-hop rhythms, sequencers and synthesizers. The new and, for many, improved, sound introduced them to a new, younger public and, for the first time in their career, U2 were becoming as big a hit on the dance floor as they were in the stadiums.

SHOOTING STARS



RIISING: JOHN HARLE

Up... First saxophonist to graduate from the Royal College of Music with 100 per cent, and accompanied to McDonald's commercials, Harle establishes himself as the world's best classical saxophonist. **Up...** As the man with the parr responsible for sharing Sir Harrison Birtwistle's not-so-melodious tunes with the rabble at the Last Night of the Proms 1995, Harle acquiesces himself admirably and still gets booted. **Land Of Hope And Glory** it ain't. **And away...** In a still more dramatic step into the limelight, Harle's album *Terror & Magnificence* features original music both jazzy and medieval, performed by Elvis Costello and jazz saxophonist Andy Sheppard. His own tour begins in Aberdeen tonight. For Harle, so long the shadowy virtuoso, that's practically Broadway.



FALLING: CARLA LANE

Going... For many a long year the disseminator of homely philosophy as scriptwriter of *The Liver Birds*, *Butterflies* and *Bread*. But her unique brand of comedy-without-laugh is on the wane by the early nineties, when *Bread* goes stale.

Going... An animal rights activist, Lane buys an island and gives it to the beasts, buys four lobsters in a swanky LA restaurant and sings 'em into the sea, and finally gets arrested at Dover for protesting against animal exports. **Gone...** The *Liver Birds* returns in a blaze of publicity. This week, it gets the chop, "by mutual agreement" says the BBC. Carla has a pop at the critics: "Some of them just hammer everything I do." Never mind the protests against seal-clubbing: who'll defend this put-upon word-smith from Carla-clubbing?

THE RSC / UK TOUR
RSC
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
A Midsummer Night's Dream
By William Shakespeare
until 9 Nov
Royal Shakespeare Theatre
Stratford-upon-Avon
0171 344 4444
24 hrs, no big fee!
12-16 Nov
Newcastle Theatre Royal
0191 222 2061
19-23 Nov
Cardiff New Theatre
01222 278899
26-30 Nov
Festival Theatre
0131 529 6000
3-7 Dec
Bath Theatre Royal
01223 448844
10-14 Dec
Plymouth Theatre Royal
01752 267222
'A magnificent, breathtaking production... brilliant'

Anyone who wants to perform so-called 'comedy' in public should have to pass a stringent exam, says former gag writer **P B Davies**

Licensed to laugh

Provocations

LAUGHTER used to be the best medicine; now it's the illness itself — an obsessive compulsive disorder afflicting millions. Some patients suffer delusions that they themselves are funny, others simply can't comprehend anything that doesn't strive for humour, however ineptly. But it seems that comedy — unlike tragedy — is a finite commodity. The more people attempt it, the thinner it is spread. In countless rooms upstairs in pubs, desperate audiences in dilapidated comedians who make nothing of life. As they proudly deliver their stillborn insights, television producers hover, chuckling professionally and sniffing for meat, however lean, that can be stuffed into the comedy sausage-machine and processed into the next new-lad smuggest or "knowingly" dire quiz show. And in the promised land of broadcasting, even the continuity announcers grope for irony, while repulsive DJs surround themselves with shrieking sycophants to let us know how funny they are.

Now, the virus has spread from the media to infect every cranny of modern life. Even the Church — traditionally a pretty reliable haven for a few glum moments — has been invaded by "charismatic" performing the Toronto Blessing, in which the congregation laughs itself into a frenzy before crashing to the



ground and doing animal impressions for the rest of the service.

In Umberto Eco's *The Name Of The Rose*, the character of Brother Jorge fiendishly suppresses the only remaining copy of a "lost" work by Aristotle, lest it corrupt the plots by its alleged endorsement of laughter as a force for good. At the time of publication, we assumed that Jorge was the villain of the piece. Now, it's clear that he's a visionary sage who saw the truth: comedy is insidious. Not for the reasons that its modern practitioners would like to imagine — that it's anarchic and irreverent — but because it has become conventional and boring, stultifying our perceptions rather than enriching them. Even Aristotle must have had his off days and if, on one of them, he produced a work encouraging the trend that has reached its nadir with the current breed of comedians and media personalities — most of whom have nothing to offer except a breath-takingly high

opinion of themselves — then he should sit in hell, watching *Game On* for ever.

Anyway, it's time for the backlash. From now on, anyone who wants to be funny in public will have to pass a ferociously difficult exam. It will encompass both theory and practice, with sections that are written, oral and, of course, anal.

Familiarity with classic texts will be required, but only to remind applicants of how much better the material they are stealing was the first time around. Hang on, I've just done it, haven't I? "Written, oral and anal." Trying to be funny. And now, blatant self-referential deconstruction. OK, it's a fair cop and I should declare some previous form. I used to make a living writing comedy — soft option Thatcher-bashing gags for Spitting Image, observational irrelevances for Jasper Carrott, strangely amusing sketches for *Weekending*. About the only honest work I can look back on with pride was the stream of shameless ribaldry that I delivered to Roy Hudd, upon which he worked an age-old magic to make innocent, harmless people laugh out loud. But that was nothing to do with modern comedy — it was more like being one among several generations of workmen, building a medieval cathedral. And now I've seen the light: you can be funny about some things all of the time, and all things some of the time, but apart from that, Mrs Lincoln, how did you enjoy the play? Blast. Done it again. There must be something I can take.

TV by mob rule

rise Mr Blok

Book of the Alias Grace Margaret Atwood

www.shiftcontrol.com

John Harle

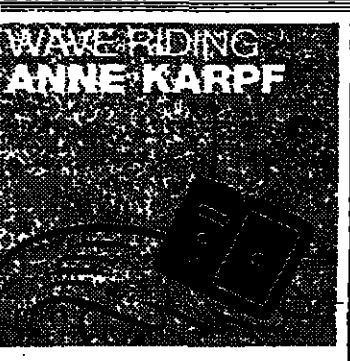
The Guardian



TV by mob rule

JENNY JONES (Sky One) was about teenagers who have breast implants. But while there were enough DD cups on display to satisfy Russ Meyer, what was really impressive and depressing about this freak show was the range of unlikely stories the guests had to relate. If not the else researchers really earn their crusts on American crying-time television. Teri had bought Ashley, 17, implants for Christmas in order to improve her daughter's self-esteem. Mother Mary and daughter Michelle were saving so that they could have boob jobs together. Kassandra Bascombe's implants had become squeezed together, joined by scar tissue. Despite this, her daughter, Chea, 19, had saved \$5,000 to secretly pay for her own implants. But boys now looked at her in a different way: "They see me as stupid, which I'm by no means stupid [sic]. I think my body pre-empted my brain." Even so, she was planning to have further breast enlargement. A woman in the audience stood up. "OK, you're a beautiful woman. OK? Why don't you spend that \$5,000 on an education — because brains will get you much further than breasts." "Wow! Yeah! All right!" yelled the audience, applauding wildly. In fact, Chea already had a full scholarship to college. This exchange and this programme typified the exploitative catastrophe of confessional TV. Just as breast implants help

to reduce women to sex objects likely to attract the most drooling, oafish sort of interest, so appearing on Jenny Jones withers guests' lives to unedifying commodities, converting experiences into spectacle for strangers' titillation. I used to be naive enough to think that buttoned-up British people could benefit from these imported emotional tempests. Watching Ricki Lake (Channel 4), especially, cured me. There's a vile mob rule on this show, incited by the host, Jenny Jones was about implants, probably because the host has them; Ricki Lake was about daughters who don't want to be fat like their mothers, probably because the host herself was fat. Both shows played daughters off against their mothers: the drama of the ungrateful offspring or the callous parent is so readily engaging. One daughter said she feared her mother's fat made people see her as a thing rather than a person. "But we see the real person underneath, don't we?" Ricki asked the studio audience, who whooped in their affirmation. Rhetorical questions on Ricki Lake always provoke whoops, never reflection. Did the audience really see the person underneath? After all, she had only been on the stage for two minutes. But if Jenny and Ricki are standing in the gutter and only looking at the stars when they're from Hollywood, The Oprah Winfrey Show (Sky One) has evolved into something different — the mask of public service broadcasting behind which are the crying confessees and their remarkable stories. This show offered tips for children for avoiding abduction: if you're thrown in the boat by an abductor, kick out the tail lights, that kind of thing. This was, Oprah assured us, essential viewing. But surely we were watching chiefly to hear the stories (such as the plucky boy who had been watching Home Alone — irony! — when the robbers broke in), rather than to be empowered. In the commercial breaks for Oprah, Sally Jessy Raphael (Sky One) assured us that her show, about children who have died in domestic accidents, was also a "gotcha see". Typically, it was anything but.



Arise Mr Bloke

HOW DO you reward a loyal audience? The answer, in the BBC's case, seems to be to shit on them from a great height. Last Sunday, Andy Kershaw's two-hour Radio 1 show, a long-time occupant of the Sunday 10pm slot, was moved to midnight to make way for a new album programme. According to a BBC spokesperson, Kershaw was shunted later because he has a loyal and dedicated audience which will follow him anywhere. (Presumably, had he managed to cultivate a disloyal one, he'd have been allowed to remain in the old slot.) One suspects that the same logic wouldn't be applied to Chris Evans. Or is "dedicated" a euphemism for "small"? And what of the new show? Presenter Stuart Maconie is squarely in the male, fast-talking, regional-accented, ironic mode, much like Kershaw himself (and John Peel and Mark Radcliffe, to this new the standard sound of Radio 1? I like it myself, I'm only asking, though his musical tastes are different. Here he plays album tracks new as well as classic, and witty listeners "test drive" new albums. Kershaw, meanwhile, continues single-handedly to track down every second young, gifted and unknown black World band, as well as playing extraordinary old blues singers such as Blind Mississippi Morris, and last week devoted most of his show to Haitian-American rappers, the Fugees. Even if it doesn't make full use of Maconie's tal-

ents, The Album Show on its first outing seemed a pleasing enough programme. Andy Kershaw's, however, is distinguished public service broadcasting. Radio 1 must be hoping that Maconie fares better than Danny Baker, who disappeared off the face of the network three weeks ago, just two years after his trumpeted debut. But Baker is back on Radio 1 Live doing the thing he does best, gabbling about sport. His new Wednesday show, The Baker Line, is a football fanzine, a fans' phone-in not unlike Six-O-Six before David M... took it over from him. (I had hoped to get through my reviewing career without ever mentioning M... or but, there, I've failed.) Programme one was lively stuff, what with Baker advocating the sacking of all referees, and exhorting disgruntled Brighton fans to occupy their stadium. Though he overdid the self-deprecation bit, along with references to the lateness of the hour (eat your heart out, Andy Kershaw), Baker's strength is that he doesn't try to lord it over his callers-in. On the contrary, the opinionated chap shares with them on as equal a footing as possible, even reassuring them that he'll stop talking when they start (not always, guv). Baker's is the voice from the terraces, punter to Mellor's pundit. But wouldn't it be wonderful if men could talk about other subjects with the same passion as they do about football? Say, cooking? As part of its half-century celebrations, Radio 3 commissioned five new poems, read by their poets. Tom Paulin called with The Wind Dog, a plump poem aptly about sound itself, and the way that language and the spoken word are inextricably bound up with personal memory and feeling. Paulin seemed to delight in its almost-repetitions and fizzing ideas, as he dipped in and out of scenes from childhood. The preceding aural montage was redundant — Paulin's poem itself summoned vignettes, sensations, objects, cheap tin trays, cheap tin trays. That's the music speaks me, sings me, makes me", rolling around their music in language at its most labial. Radio 3 may have found its bard.



This week's plays — including the monster Heathcliff — represent a victory for style over content. And they're all the worse for that, says Michael Billington

Cliff hanger

The blockbusters

STYLE or substance? Form or content? Ideally in art the two should mesh so that you cannot see the join. But looking back over this week's theatrical offerings — from the desperately feeble Heathcliff to Stephen Bill's new state-of-the-nation play in Richmond — it strikes me that you can't beat a good theme: that in drama, technical deficiencies matter less than the spectacle of a writer grappling with an important issue. In the woe-filled Heathcliff, which, incidentally, has already taken \$8.5 million in advance sales, there is neither style nor substance. This is not theatre so much as an act of popular worship part of the veneration of Saint Cliff. The faithful gather in a vast Brum hangar — shortly to stage the Birmingham

International Tattoo — not to be told a story or to see Emily Brontë's novel come to life. They have clearly assembled to see their idol pretending to be a saturnine gypsy; and their reactions of mock-horror when he strikes his wife or huris a rival to the ground point up their awareness of the loved object's squeaky-clean image. I have no objection to Sir Cliff wanting to extend his range; and the sniping about his age proves totally irrelevant. But there was 10 times as much genuine drama in the moment this summer when he entertained the rain-soaked Wimbledon crowd with golden oldies: that had the spontaneous combustion of real theatre. What we get in Heathcliff is more in the way of a contrived, apologetic. If he really wanted to test his mettle as an actor, Sir Cliff would play in genuine theatres and would have written a book-musical that allowed scope for other characters. But the

really symbolic moment in Heathcliff comes when the hero stands on top of a crag posing in a manner reminiscent of Caspar David Friedrich's painting, Man and Woman Observing The Moon, the work that actually inspired Waiting For Godot. Where Beckett discovered an abiding image of desolation, Sir Cliff finds only an excuse for romantic attitude. A painting is also at the centre of Yasmina Reza's acclaimed play, Art, at Wyndham's: the all-white abstract canvas purchased by Serge (Tom Courtenay) and vilified by his friend Marc (Albert Finney). It is a highly stylish play and raises all sorts of interesting ideas about the conflict between friendship and art: between the value we attach to a human being and to an inanimate object. But how much substance does Reza's play really have and how much does it challenge the philistine assumption that modern art

is some kind of licensed fraud? Wouldn't the debate be more intense if Serge had bought, say, a Rothko which his chum then proceeded to deride? And why is Marr's argument that modern art is all based on unrepentable surprise allowed to go unanswared? I found much more substance in a lecture I heard Robert Hughes give at last year's Melbourne Festival. At one point he suggested that the real problem with the avant-garde today is that it is not ahead of anything; that it is venerated, hyped, highly priced and glamorously exhibited and has turned into the new establishment. That is a much more substantive thesis than Reza's familiar argument that the emperor has no clothes. The style versus substance debate, however, really gets tricky with Jez Butterworth's Mojo, now revived at the splendidly distressed Duke of York's: carpets and red plush have been stripped away to give the building the rough-texture feel of Peter Brook's Bouffes du Nord. The revamped suits perfectly Butterworth's play which presents Soho fifties gang wars in fast-paced, high-octane, movie-influenced dialogue. The opening stichomythia between two minor hoods is as funny as anything you will hear from time to time in gestures that are meant to be threatening but that are actually as menacing as sardines on toast. The principals fare little better. Leila, the outsider heroine who causes the emotional damage, arrives suited out in Edwardian Raj, inexplicably changing into bare midriff and loose hair when victimised. Her stropky priest, Nourabad, is a laconic Billy Idol lookalike in flowing white chiffon. Zurga, one of the rivals for Leila's affections, is a fetching bit of rough in a black kaftan. The other, Nadir, emerges from the jungle with shoulder-length hair, army jacket and sweat pants. The cast battle bravely to get the

central emotional tangle across, though much of the staging is unintentionally risible. "You are safe here," Leila cried to Nadir as the couple attempted to consummate their passion atop a vertiginous zig-zag. As if in answer, the construction began to wobble violently. It says much for ETO's musicianship that Bizet emerged from this travesty unscathed. Andrew Greenwood proved yet again to be an excellent conductor of French music, emphasising the subtle sensuality of the score. Adrian Clarke's Zurga was a performance of considerable stature, richly sung and dramatically compelling. Jeffrey Stewart negotiated the implacable tessitura of Nadir's arias with ease, succeeding where many a better known tenor has conspicuously failed. As Leila, Sandra Zeltzer was exciting, but somewhat raucous in music that needs more refinement. The chorus can only be described as heroic. Bizet survived, but the production inevitably begs the question as to whether ETO have lost their way. Accompanying Pearl Fishers on tour is a production of Rigoletto which would grace any international opera house and which gets Verdi's masterpiece as compellingly right as this attempt at Pearl Fishers gets Bizet wrong. Until now ETO have been one of the most inventive and original opera companies in the country. One only hopes that the interruption of service will be temporary.



Pearl Fishers... buried in post-modern symbolism HENNETTA BUTLER

Tim Ashley sees English Touring Opera get Pearl Fishers totally wrong

Washed up

ETC's new production of Pearl Fishers is a major disappointment from a company whose artistic record has hitherto been exemplary and which should have got the piece right. Bizet works best pared down. His musical language is terse and aphoristic. The origins of his theatricality lie not in 19th-century melodrama, but in the sculpted, gestural theatre of Racine; Pearl Fishers is essentially Racine transported to Ceylon. As with Racine, the setting matters little. What is important is the emotional interplay of four characters, conveyed by a score in which every note speaks volumes. Expectations ran high. ETO could have produced an immaculate piece of small-scale, suitably muted music-theatre. Instead, Caroline Gawn's production, designed by Aldona Cunningham, buries the opera under a heap of post-modern symbolism. We are in a bright blue Hackney Never-Never Land, complete with palm trees and phallic cacti. A large pastebord model of

the Hokusai Wave plausibly suggests water, but also serves to indicate rocks and foliage. The Pearl Fishers themselves, decked out in crimson satin uniforms suggesting oilskins and sou'westers, look like the disaffected members of a whaling fleet. Despite the fact that pearls are, I believe, generally found in oyster shells, they carry floppy, green plastic harpoons which they wave from time to time in gestures that are meant to be threatening but that are actually as menacing as sardines on toast. The principals fare little better. Leila, the outsider heroine who causes the emotional damage, arrives suited out in Edwardian Raj, inexplicably changing into bare midriff and loose hair when victimised. Her stropky priest, Nourabad, is a laconic Billy Idol lookalike in flowing white chiffon. Zurga, one of the rivals for Leila's affections, is a fetching bit of rough in a black kaftan. The other, Nadir, emerges from the jungle with shoulder-length hair, army jacket and sweat pants. The cast battle bravely to get the

Book of the Week

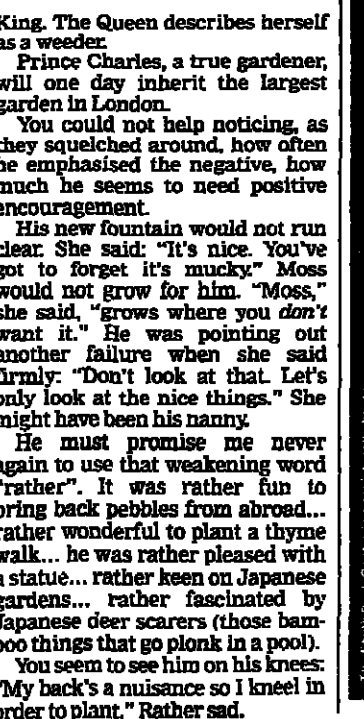
Alias Grace Margaret Atwood 1996 Booker Prize Shortlisted At the age of sixteen Grace was jailed for the cold-blooded murders of her employer and his lover. McDermot, Grace's alleged accomplice, was hanged in 1843, but her sentence was commuted to life. After 16 years, no longer considered mad or dangerous, she claims to have no memory of the murders. As a young doctor probes her memories the enigma of whether Grace is a femme fatale and murderer or an innocent victim unfolds. To order Alias Grace at the special price of £11.99 (mp £18.99) call free now on 0500 418 419 or complete this coupon and send it to our address below. I enclose a cheque / PO made payable to "Guardian Interactive" (UK only £1.99) Please debit my Access / Visa / Delta / Mastercard / Switch Card No. Mr / Mrs / Miss Card Expiry Date Address Postcode Telephone Signature Send to: Guardian Interactive, 250 Western Avenue, London W8 2UZ, UK. Fax 0181 261 5878 Tel +44 181 234 5588 outside UK. Customer Care 0181 234 5622 E-Mail: bid@guardian.co.uk Please do not send any further mail from companies, carefully selected Guardian. The Guardian INTERACTIVE

Nancy Banks-Smith catches Prince Charles in the garden

A rather weedy royal

THE VOICES, though faint, were clear. "You go first." "Oh no!" "After you." "No, come on! You've got to go first." A small, bustling dog, with no patience for this sort of thing, shot out first. Then, like the weather man and woman who can never come out together, Prince Charles and Rosemary Verey. It was raining relentlessly. This dripping image of Prince Charles at Highgrove was used by several papers the day he was divorced. It seemed appropriate. In fact The English Country Garden (BBC2) was filmed in May because his wildflower meadow is at its best then. The Bishop flowered above the buttercups. The Bishop is a purple tulip, flushed like a prelate who has looked upon the wine when it is red. Mrs Parker Bowles, supposedly, once said: "Come and see my tulips at Highgrove." The Princess did not appreciate the pronoun. The last gardener in the royal family — unless you count the

King. The Queen describes herself as a weeder. Prince Charles, a true gardener, will one day inherit the largest garden in London. You could not help noticing, as they squelched around, how often he emphasised the negative, how much he seems to need positive encouragement. His new fountain would not run clear. She said: "It's nice. You've got to forget it's mucky." Moss would not grow for him. "Moss," she said, "grows where you don't want it." He was pointing out another failure when she said firmly: "Don't look at that. Let's only look at the nice things." She might have been his nanny. He must promise me never again to use that weakening word "rather". It was rather fun to bring back pebbles from abroad... rather wonderful to plant a thyme walk... he was rather pleased with a statue... rather keen on Japanese gardens... rather fascinated by Japanese deer scarers (those bamboo things that go plunk in a pool). You seem to see him on his knees: "My back's a nuisance so I kneel in order to plant." Rather said.



Stormy weather... Prince Charles and Rosemary Verey

National Touring Exhibitions Art beyond the Visible Curated by Marina Warner Ends 3 Nov Manchester City Art Galleries Princess Street Manchester M2 3JL 0161 236 8244 Tues to Sat 10.00am - 6.30pm Sun 2.00pm - 6.30pm Mon 11.00am - 6.30pm Admission free Also tours to Brighton, Swansea and London Details on 017 921 0837

Racing

Halling can clinch title

Ron Cox expects the Godolphin team to complete a champion double

TODAY'S Champion Stakes at Newmarket promises to live up to its name...

The duel between Godolphin's Saeed bin Suroor, trainer of Halling, and Henry Cecil, who pins his faith in Bosra Sham...

For Cecil, the drama does not end there. Bosra Sham's well-chronicled foot problem at one stage made today's showdown unlikely...

Bosra Sham pleases Cecil

FEARS about Bosra Sham missing today's Champion Stakes eased yesterday...



That's my boy... In Command receives a welcoming pat after winning yesterday's Dewhurst Stakes at Newmarket

PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

In Command is best of the bunch

Graham Rock

THE Dewhurst Stakes has produced many champions over the years...

helped In Command to show improved form, but the result was generally greeted with indifference...

Dubal, but now the season's leading two-year-old will remain with John Dunlop...

to land his first Group-race ahead. Yesterday Dazzle was conceding 2lb to her rival...

ahead. Yesterday Dazzle was conceding 2lb to her rival, a remarkably display of consistency from these two high-class fillies...

Newmarket card with form for televised races

Table of race results and form for Newmarket, including races like 1.45 Alamy's Thorpe, 2.30 Good Hand, and 3.00 Good Hand.

Table of race results and form for Channel 4, including races like 4.15 DUBAI CHAMPION STAKES, 4.45 SEAFORD LODGE HOTEL BENTLEY STAKES, and 5.20 BOK SPARK FLORA HANDICAP.

Table of race results and form for Catterick, including races like 2.05 Hyde Park, 2.40 Break The Rules, and 3.15 MO FOODS MURPHY HANDICAP.

Table of race results and form for 4.55 FOUR BECK CONDITIONS STAKES, 5.30 CLOSE OF PLAY HANDICAP, and 6.00 Blinked for the first time - CATTERICK.

Table of race results and form for Results, including sections for NEWMARKET, HURLEFORD, and CATTERICK.

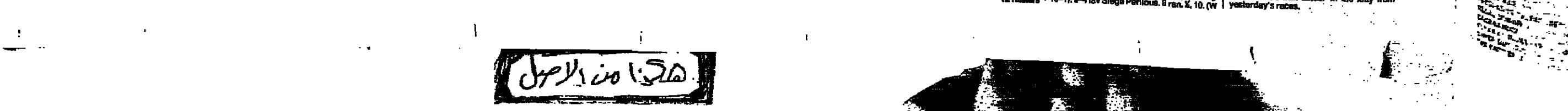
Table of race results and form for Channel 4, including races like 3.00 OYSTER COMMUNITY HANDICAP, 3.30 THE BATTLE OF BRISTOL, and 4.00 THE BATTLE OF BRISTOL.

Table of race results and form for Channel 4, including races like 4.45 SEAFORD LODGE HOTEL BENTLEY STAKES, 5.20 BOK SPARK FLORA HANDICAP, and 5.50 THE BATTLE OF BRISTOL.

Table of race results and form for Catterick, including races like 3.50 CROWD HOLE BARK HANDICAP, 4.25 THREE GULF LIMITED STAKES, and 4.55 FOUR BECK CONDITIONS STAKES.

Table of race results and form for Results, including sections for NEWMARKET, HURLEFORD, and CATTERICK.

Table of race results and form for Results, including sections for NEWMARKET, HURLEFORD, and CATTERICK.





No way through... Matthew Ridge is stopped short by Great Britain's Paul Broadbent and Terry O'Connor during yesterday's match in Auckland

First Rugby League Test: New Zealand 17, Great Britain 12

Kiwis capitalise as Morley sins

Andy Wilson in Auckland

ANDRIAN MORLEY will never forget his first brief taste of Test football. The 19-year-old Leeds forward was sin-binned by the Australian referee Bill Harrigan within moments of coming on as a late substitute and in the remaining nine minutes the centre John Timu scored two tries which gave New Zealand a scarcely deserved win.

longer. Kris Radlinski, who switched from centre to full-back when Spruce was injured, was penalised for holding down the scrum-half Stacey Jones and Ridge kicked his second goal to reduce the deficit to eight points. But the real penalty came when Morley was binned for a repeat offence.

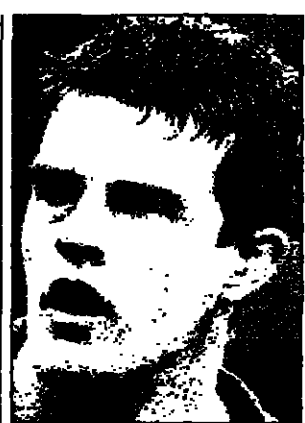
Great Britain's problems had started with a Bobbie Goulding cross-kick to the right wing in the 54th minute. The move had already produced the Lions' first try when Alan Hunte rose above Richard Barnett but it was a high-risk strategy against the latter, who has represented New Zealand at basketball.

cover offence but Barnett stepped over his tackle. Although Barnett was eventually stopped, Spruce was forced off with a gashed face, forcing Larder to switch Radlinski and introduce the Sheffield youngster Keith Senior at centre. The defence never looked secure again.

Rugby Union

A spot of Welsh dog in the Harlequin pack

SENTIMENT will not blunt the edge of Gareth Llewellyn's iron-clad commitment when the 5ft 6in Harlequins lock confronts his old mates from Neath in a game at The Stoop that could spell the end of the Welsh club's interest in the Heineken European Cup.



Llewellyn... iron-clad Robert Armstrong on Gareth Llewellyn, who tackles his old club Neath today

Win bonuses of £1,250 per game explain why he moved from The Gnoil, Llewellyn, whose 50 appearances for Wales make him the most capped lock in their history, was targeted by Quins' director of rugby Dick Best as the kind of streetwise senior pro to put "dog" into an outfit who used to be widely regarded as a soft touch.

His desire to play in the forthcoming internationals against Australia and South Africa keeps him bombing up and down the M4 to work for Harlequins, a man who knows his regular Welsh squad sessions in Cardiff. "I can handle all the training sessions with club and country," he says, "and I work out with weights 100 without suffering from fatigue, but all that driving does take a bit out of me. Since I gave up my job as a British Steel fitter in Port Talbot last July I've been trying to learn how to use the extra time to best advantage, but sometimes the day goes by in a flash. I haven't played golf at Richmond yet."

Still, Llewellyn knows that

professionalism, which has brought him a five-year contract, could not have arrived at a better time, given that his best years have yet to come, not to mention the 1996 World Cup in Wales. The fact that he now literally rubs shoulders with some of the best players in Europe - Cabannes, Wood and Carling, for example - can only stimulate his own highly focused pursuit of excellence.

"It was an odd experience to jump straight from the close-knit atmosphere of Neath into a London club that had recruited so many good players from other countries," admits Llewellyn. "We took time to get acquainted but we've managed nine wins from nine games and I believe the best is yet to come from Harlequins. We're an adaptable bunch of players and, despite the different nationalities, we don't have a language problem. Cabannes speaks fantastic English and the prop Benezec has very good pidgin English."

"I already knew Jason Leonard from way back because my brother Glyn, who went to the North London Poly, used to play for Barking with regular Welsh squad sessions in Cardiff. "I can handle all the training sessions with club and country," he says, "and I work out with weights 100 without suffering from fatigue, but all that driving does take a bit out of me. Since I gave up my job as a British Steel fitter in Port Talbot last July I've been trying to learn how to use the extra time to best advantage, but sometimes the day goes by in a flash. I haven't played golf at Richmond yet."

Offiah clear for Bedford debut

MARTIN OFFIAH will make his debut for Bedford against Rotherham in League Two today, less than two weeks after specialists said a toe injury might rule him out for the season. "I feel sharp and ready," the wing said after two fitness tests.

Delight for Bedford was tempered when the employment department placed a temporary ban on the player. "That's another advantage of having players from different parts of the world."

Stratford National Hunt programme

Table of horse racing results for Stratford National Hunt programme, including races like 2.25 Pave of Jacks, 2.55 Ranger Stone, 3.25 Newcastle General, etc.

Kempton (N.H.)

Table of horse racing results for Kempton (N.H.), including races like 2.15 Captain Kheffan, 2.50 Square's Oath, 3.20 Warm Spell, etc.

Kelso (N.H.)

Table of horse racing results for Kelso (N.H.), including races like 2.00 Side of Hill, 2.30 Topher Mount, 3.00 Marble Hill, etc.

Wolverhampton all-weather card tonight

Table of horse racing results for Wolverhampton all-weather card tonight, including races like 7.00 Napier Star, 7.30 Gosh Forman, 8.00 Gosh Forman, etc.

Wolverhampton all-weather card tonight

Table of horse racing results for Wolverhampton all-weather card tonight, including races like 7.00 Napier Star, 7.30 Gosh Forman, 8.00 Gosh Forman, etc.

Fenton banned

PIP PAYNE, the Newmarket trainer, and jockey Michael Penton were found to be in breach of the non-triers' rule over the running and riding of Kweilo in the Travis Perkins Maiden Stakes at Newmarket yesterday.

Penton was banned for five days and Payne fined £400 after the stewards ruled that the gelding had failed to obtain his best possible placing.

Table of horse racing results for Fenton banned, including races like 2.00 Side of Hill, 2.30 Topher Mount, 3.00 Marble Hill, etc.

RACELINE 0930 168+ COMMENTARY RESULTS table with columns for race name, time, and result.



Lying in wait for Chelsea... Efan Ekoku's five goals in seven games have helped propel Wimbledon to fifth place in the Premiership

PHOTOGRAPH FRANK BARON

Straight man fronting the Crazy Gang

Paul Weaver talks to the striker who has helped Wimbledon to within range of an unlikely spot at the top of the Premiership

WIMBLEDON could be top of the Premiership tonight, albeit for 24 hours; the club with no home, no money and fewer supporters than Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party, the make-do-and-mend team of Vinnie Jones and his Crazy Gang, grinning from the summit as they look down on Manchester United, Liverpool, Newcastle and the rest. Can you imagine it?

The scenario is not that far-fetched. Wimbledon stand fifth this morning and their six successive league wins represent their best run in the Premiership. Now all they

have to do is beat Chelsea at Stamford Bridge today while Arsenal lose to Coventry. Efan Ekoku, who has scored five times in seven games, is one of the players most responsible for this vivid little passage in the club's history.

On the first weekend of the Motor Show Ekoku describes himself rather aptly: "I'm 29 but I'm a low mileage model — and with a full service history."

Ekoku was speaking in the club's training ground car park, his quiet articulation finding a difficult path through the traditional post-training dissonance, a cacophony of

mock brawls, noisy japes, mobile-phone conversations and clattering tea mugs; Vinnie was shouting in one corner but his audience paid him the sort of desultory attention experienced by air stewards in the middle of safety drill.

The car analogy is not as glib as it might sound. The powerful Nigerian forward explained: "I've played in 150 league and cup games and that's not a lot for a player my age. But that should help give me a longer shelf-life. Look at Ian Wright. He came late to big football but now, in his early thirties, is playing some of the best stuff of his career."

"We can win a cup this season. It would be foolish to think we have a real chance of winning the League. But having said that I was at Norwich when we finished third and at Christmas we had a nine-point lead. We have a bigger squad here. Joe Kinneer said every season that it is his aim to stay up. But if we finish fifth from bottom every year I don't think he would be very happy. We will be disappointed not to finish somewhere in the top 10."

"Joe is very honest with his players. Every day here is one big laugh but we work hard and train very seriously. At Norwich the emphasis was more on skill and ability. That is not to say we don't have those qualities here — we have more internationals at Wimbledon than we ever

had at Norwich. But Mike Walker's attitude was that we were good enough to beat anyone playing the same way."

"Joe is more inclined to change tactics for different sides. The other difference between the two men is that Joe mixes more socially with the players. This season our results went badly. But our attitude was right from the word go. We had a lot of fun in our pre-season visits to a Navy base near Plymouth and we felt confident ever since."

Ekoku considers himself Nigerian, although the vowel-sounds owe more to Lancashire than Lagos. Like his elder brother Abl, a former United Kingdom discus champion who turned to rugby union, Efan was born in Manchester and grew up in Liverpool. His father is Nigerian, his mother from Barbados.

His team-mates refer to him as "Chief" and he takes it cheerfully. "Paul Miller, the old Spurs player, gave me the nickname after I moved to Bournemouth from Sutton [for £100,000 in 1990]. My father is a traditional chief back in Nigeria."

Ekoku moved to Norwich for £500,000 in 1993 and to Wimbledon two years ago for a little under £1 million. His first goal for Wimbledon was against Norwich.

"The atmosphere at Wimbledon impressed me immediately. It didn't feel like a club near the bottom of the table. The spirit is great and the manager jokes the players for a drink and a joke. People are always asking me about this Crazy Gang thing and our secret, but our only secret is we have better players than people give us credit for."

Soccer

Sugar puts a brave face on publicity hitch

Soccer Diary

Martin Thorpe

NOW keep a straight face. There was once a product called the Amstrad Face-straightener. It got rid of wrinkles. Unfortunately it could do nothing about bad luck.

Alan Sugar was reminded of it on Thursday having just seen pictures of his conciliatory handshake with Bosnich knocked off the back pages by Gazza's sending-off.

"For this face-straightener's launch we had the biggest press call I've seen in my life," recalled Sugar. "We had Julia Carling there endorsing the thing. It was going into Boots, we were on a winner."

"So I was laying back later on watching News At Ten waiting for the piece on the launch to come up thinking this thing's going to sell, we've got it made. And there it was: 'Will Carling and Julia Carling had started divorce proceedings...'"

"And what made it worse was they illustrated it with pictures of her from our launch with the product totally missing."

psychic and concerned parent would do. He rang his friend Ivor Doble, the Exeter chairman, on his mobile phone and said: "Don't worry, you're going to win." And they did 2-1.

WHAT is the difference between Pavel Srnec and Cindrella? Cinderella always got to the ball.

IN 1972 he stated categorically in Hunter Davies' classic *The Glory Game*: "I don't want to become a manager. I'd end up in the loony bin." Barnes' new manager, Alan Mullery.

APARENTLY Arsenal fans have got a new chant: "One Tony Adams, have only one Tony Adams." (From Mary Taylor of Macclesfield Forest.)

THANK goodness Labour lost the last election. Roy Hattersley wrote a piece for a national paper last week heaping fulsome praise on Martin Tyler for professionally filling 60 prime-time minutes while the bomb scare was sorted out at the recent England Under-21 international. "Tyler cuts through the claptrap", read the headline. Er, it was actually Alan Parry.

DOES THIS offer some illumination on the current England coach's view of refuelling, asks Dave Leggett of *Todmorden*?

"Chris Waddle, Glenn Hoddle, Kenny Sansom and I have found one way you can only have a yard of ale — nothing else. We've been nicknamed the Yard Squad because we pop in at lunchtime and do the business. Last night in the hotel disco, a few of the England lads ran up a drinks bill of £500." From Mark Hateley Home And Away, on the 1995 tour of Mexico.

SO THERE were Exeter City at Carlisle on Tuesday night, losing 1-0 at half-time. And there was Uri Geller sitting hundreds of miles away watching Reading v Manchester City when he heard the plight of his son Daniel's favourite team. So he did what any

ALESSANDRO Veronese was sent off last weekend during an Italian amateur game for Battaglia. But before he walked he kissed the referee on both cheeks. On Friday he was banned for one game for being sent off and got another for the kisses. The referee was a woman.

Typically Italian, just like Pierpaolo Curti, a promising Serie C striker who is quitting full-time soccer. "I have achieved my lifetime's ambition to play as a professional but it has been a rude awakening," he said. "I realised that a part of me had been wiped out. Too much soccer was stifling my creativity as a painter."

APARENTLY Mark Bosnich was confused. Aston Villa had actually asked him to do fewer impressions.

“Does anyone really want to travel behind a wall of insurance?”

A very down to earth question.

The words 'American Express' are understood around the world. That's important if you're abroad and you find you need medical attention, cover for lost baggage or personal property, compensation for travel delay or funding for legal expenses. So if you need emergency assistance or even pre-travel advice, our representatives are on call 24 hours a day wherever on earth you are. We offer annual cover from just £59 and single trip policies that you need not be a Cardmember to take advantage of. You see, your travel insurance provider can make a world of difference.

To find out how we can help you do more with travel insurance, call:

0800 700737

Insurance Services

Policy terms and conditions are available upon request. American Express Services Europe Limited, Reg. Office, Portland House, 1 Stag Place, London SW1E 5BZ, Reg. No. 1833139. TIN1

United back in pursuit of Nadal

MANCHESTER United's manager Alex Ferguson expects to learn this week whether his three-month pursuit of the Spain defender Miguel Nadal will succeed.

Only four weeks after Nadal's proposed £2.4 million move from Barcelona to Old Trafford collapsed because of a wrangle over money, the deal is seemingly being resurrected.

The 30-year-old Nadal was left out of the Barcelona side who faced Red Star Belgrade in the European Cup Winners' Cup on Thursday after talking his manager Bobby Robson that he was not in the mood to play. His exclusion meant he was not cup-tied.

Speculation was rife in Spain yesterday that Nadal was, in fact, simply seeking to widen the rift between himself and Robson in the hope of being allowed to leave.

Gerry Francis's Continent-wide search for new players may see the Austrian national defender Anton Pfeffer join Tottenham next week from Austria Vienna.

Pfeffer, 31, who has 42 caps, said yesterday he had a "50-50" chance of joining Spurs while the Vienna club maintained they would not stand in his way.

Peter Shilton's hopes of making his 99th League appearance today were blocked when West Ham recalled the former England goalkeeper only eight minutes before he was due to complete a move to Cambridge.

Cambridge wanted Shilton, 47, to play at home to Rochdale after losing Scott Barrett with injury. But the move was called off when West Ham's reserve goalkeeper Steve Mautone suffered a knock in training.

Steve Coppell has made his first Manchester City signing, paying Arsenal £300,000 for Eddie McGoldrick, who had been on a month's loan at Maine Road. The versatile 31-year-old player was also signed by Coppell during his time at Crystal Palace.

Terry Gibson has left Barnet, less than a week after Terry Bullivant walked out as first-team coach. Gibson resigned after talks with the chairman Tony Kleantous about his role under Alan Mullery, director of football.

Tragedy in Guatemala precipitates Fifa action on crowd security

No fences for France finals

FRANCE, the host country, expect to be ordered by Fifa to remove all perimeter fencing at the 1998 World Cup venues in response to the stadium tragedy in Guatemala on Wednesday in which 84 people died and at least 147 were injured.

"Fences are for animals and prisoners, not football fans," said Sepp Blatter, the world governing body's general secretary, yesterday. "I believe that all the fences for the World Cup in France should be taken down."

Many of those who died were crushed against the chainlink fence separating the crowd from the pitch as an avalanche of fans fell into the rows of seats and down a flight of stairs at a World Cup qualifying match between Guatemala and Costa Rica. It was the worst

stadium disaster in World Cup history.

Blatter said that Fifa had been working for the last few weeks on dropping plans to have fences in place in France. There was no fencing at the European Championship finals in England during the summer, and no major crowd trouble was experienced inside the grounds.

Fifa has confirmed that Guatemala's next qualifying match against Trinidad and Tobago, originally scheduled for next Friday, has been postponed indefinitely, as has the aborted match against Costa Rica.

"All other matches will proceed as scheduled, including a game between the United States and Guatemala in the United States on November 3," said Fifa's spokesman Andreas Herron.

Egypt, Morocco and South Africa have each intimated to Fifa that they are interesting in making bids to take the World Cup finals to the African continent for the first time in 2006.

They will face fierce European opposition from the 1996 hosts England, whose credentials have been boosted by the success of Euro 96, and Germany, who staged the finals in 1974. Argentina and Brazil also plan to enter bids.

Speaking at a symposium in Munich, Blatter announced that he might be ready to continue in his position at Fifa after 1998, the year he had been expected to retire.

"Everything depends on who becomes the new president. If he thinks it can still be useful I will stay, even if my role is changed," he said.

TEAM SHEET

- Arsenal v Coventry**
Denise Bergkamp will have to make do with a place on the bench as Arsene Wenger's 2-2 draw at Old Trafford last week. Romi Gardie could also be among the substitutes. Coventry will be without the left-back David Burrows, who has been replaced by a young player, Andy Smith (free) and Paul Williams.
- Aston Villa v Leeds**
The Villa manager Brian Little is set to sideline Savo Milosevic, who has netted only three times in eight games this season and will make way for Tommy Johnson. Gareth Southgate is expected to return after injury. Leeds's Ian Rush has recovered from hamstring trouble and will be alongside Mark Hateley, playing the last match of his loan spell from QPR. Carlton Palmer is back after a one-match ban.
- Chelsea v Wimbledon**
Chelsea's player-manager Ruud Geulink has raised the likelihood to recall himself and the defenders Michael Duberry (injured) and Terry Phelan (ankle) are not ready to return either. The Wimbledon defence is back after a one-match ban. Dean Blackwell is likely to start in place of Brian McClair (ankle).
- Middlesbrough v Tottenham**
Middlesbrough's Scottish international defender Derek White is set to return after missing Monday's 2-2 draw at Sunderland. Tottenham's Chris Armstrong (ankle) faces a test and if he fails it the teenager Gary Allister will return after recovering from a virus. Andy Smith (free) and Roney Rosenhal (hamstring) are still out.
- Nottingham Forest v Derby**
Forest have rejected the temptation to unloan Kevin Campbell (hamstring). Jason Lee is likely to partner Dean Sturridge up front and Steve Basherwick is expected to keep his place in central defence. The Dutch striker Ron Williams returns in place of Dean Sturridge (ankle) to Derby.
- Sheffield Wed v Blackburn**
Guy Whetton looks likely to make way for Ben Carter. Wednesday's record
- Southampton v Sunderland**
The Southampton manager Greaves Souness may give full debuts to the Norwegian striker Egil Orskovstad, the Israeli midfielder Eyal Berkovic and the club-record £1.3 million Dutch full-back Ulrich van Gobbel. With Dave Beasant still recovering from a groin injury, Neil Mason appears confident in goal. Sunderland have the full-back Martin Scott and the striker Craig Russell back in their starting line-up.
- West Ham v Leicester**
West Ham can call on Paolo Fuze, back after injury, and Marc Hooper, who has served a one-match ban. The winger Steve Lazaridis is fit again but could be kept out by Keith Heward while Florin Radaucanu is set to start alongside Hugo Portillo, on loan from Sporting Lisbon. Leicester have three players back after a one-match ban but the midfielders Neil Lennon (groin) and Andy Murray (ankle) are struggling and the captain Steve Walsh faces a test.
- Liverpool v Everton**
Roy Evans may recall Neil Ruddock at the expense of John Stones and will also assess the fitness of Robbie Fowler, who played 83 minutes in Switzerland on Thursday after missing three matches with a groin injury. Dave Watson (knee) and growl may return to the Everton defence but they could be without John Ebbell (ankle) and Steve Parfitt (hamstring).
- Newcastle v Man United**
Keith Gillespie (flu) and a rivalised record to play as Newcastle aim to bounce back from their 3-0 UEFA Cup setback against Ferencváros with revenge for the 1-0 home defeat by Manchester United last season. Jordi Cruyff is the only player to have played for both clubs. Ryan Giggs (hamstring).



Performance of the week: The Norwegian Romy Johnsen (Manchester United) whose subbing of Jay Jay Okocha helped turn the tide against Fenerbahce on Wednesday.

AN Other

HIS NAME suggests a bit of a loner but he was the most gregarious of players as well as being one of England's better defenders. His career began wearily, became distinctly sheepish, and then suffered two blue periods before talking to the woods. Later he lorded it at the Manor and after a spell in a white cap abroad he took up more serious millinery at home.

Last week: Mark Laurensen (Preston), Brighton, Liverpool and, as team manager, Oxford United.

Handwritten signature or mark in Arabic script.

Golf

Brilliant Els pulls off great escape

David Davies at Wentworth

IN ONE OF the classic confrontations, the proven thoroughbred, Ernie Els, beat one of this season's form horses Steve Stricker, after being six down with only 16 to play in the second round of the Toyota World Match Play Championship yesterday.

Els, who won on the 36th hole, joined Gary Player and Sandy Lyle in the Houdini club, reserved for those who have achieved the seemingly impossible in this tournament. The South African won by the narrowest of margins in one of his last 16 holes, while Stricker played that same stretch in one over.

Hole by hole

MORNING Els Out 4 3 5 6 3 4 4 4 4 3 1 In 3 4 5 4 3 4 4 6 1 36 Stricker Out 4 3 3 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 1 In 3 1 2 4 3 3 4 4 4 4 35

AFTERNOON Els Out 4 3 3 4 3 5 5 3 4 3 1 In 3 2 4 4 3 3 4 4 4 1 34 Stricker Out 4 3 4 5 3 5 5 4 4 4 1 In 2 4 5 4 3 4 4 5 1 36

Els's achievement was at least as great a feat as that of his fellow countryman Player for, although the latter was seven down with 17 to play, it took him until the 37th hole finally to subdue Tony Lema back in 1985.

Lyle's win over Nick Faldo in 1982 is arguably the greatest of all these fantastic recoveries in that, though he was only six down with 17 to play he actually won in the end by 2 and 1.

Afterwards Els was almost bemused by the fact of his win. "When we started again in the afternoon," he said, "I just wanted to get to the second hole. I didn't think I had much of a chance. He was all over me in the morning."

In fact, he reversed the score exactly, going round in 66 in the afternoon to match the American's six under in the morning. Stricker, like Els had done in the morning, took 70 in the afternoon.

Els might have been suffering from a slightly unorthodox preparation for the tournament. There have been social occasions with Ian Botham and Allan Lamb and on Thursday he played golf on Wentworth grounds that "I wanted to watch the match in front - it was much more interesting."

Jose Maria Olazabal, the 30-year-old Spaniard who has been out of action for 13 months while having treatment for rheumatoid arthritis, reaffirmed in Paris yesterday that he hopes to make his comeback next February.

I've got a weakness although I haven't shown them yet." He certainly put that right in the afternoon. He had to contend with 11 putts over the first nine holes from Els, but during that same time, Stricker was missing six greens.

The mind games had begun as early as the 3rd, when Els chipped in for a winning birdie, continued at the 8th hole when he did it again, both times from 25 feet, and then the South African really rubbed it in at the 9th.

Having never even scented the fairway, he holed a 40ft par putt for a half, and the combined effect of the chips and the putts on Stricker were interesting. Els missed the green at the 10th and the American said to him: "Shall I give it to you or do you want to hit it?" The initiative and the momentum were now with Els.

He continued to play well, squared at the 15th where he hit a six-iron second to four feet and won at the 18th, although not without alarms. Stricker hit his drive into a bunker, hit the lip with his recovery and then had to attempt to hit a green 238 yards away with one foot in, the other out, of the sand.

The result was what Els called "one of the best shots I've ever seen in my life". He hit the green, but so did Els, in two, and two putts later the champion of the last two years had won his seventh successive match in this event.

Els had been due to meet Colin Montgomerie but the Scot rather surprisingly lost to Mark Brooks, the US PGA champion who had been two down with 11 to play. From there on, though, Brooks was seven under.

Vijay Singh beat the reigning US Open champion Steve Jones by 9 and 8 in a match in which the winner was approximately nine under.

Jones has found it difficult to come to terms with the demands of his celebrity, but his was not the worst margin of defeat in this championship since it started in 1984. Roberto de Vicenzo lost by 10 and 8 to Arnold Palmer in 1966 and Tom Watson defeated Dale Hayes 11 and 9 in 1978.

Severiano Ballesteros also beat Chip Beck by 9 and 8, after which the American talked about having gone through "the crucible of humiliation".

Jones was a good deal more relaxed that that. When, at the 17th hole in the morning, he hit a drive out of bounds, he decided against hitting any more holes than he had to. "I wanted to watch the match in front - it was much more interesting."

Jose Maria Olazabal, the 30-year-old Spaniard who has been out of action for 13 months while having treatment for rheumatoid arthritis, reaffirmed in Paris yesterday that he hopes to make his comeback next February.



Searching for a new image... Chris Eubank in reflective mood as he shadow boxes in a Cairo gym

Boxing

Eubank flair for bizarre in Cairo

Kevin Mitchell finds the great eccentric coming back with weight on his mind

LIKE Mr Bean wrestling with life's little challenges in a laundromat, Chris Eubank, one of the great but misunderstood comedians of our time, combines an indomitable spirit with a sense of the ridiculous in relaunching his boxing career in front of several thousand fascinated Egyptians tonight.

They have never seen professional boxing before; it is almost certain they have never experienced anything like Eubank. But there is no denying that Cairo has taken this weird and wonderful man to its heart. Optimists in Eubank's inner circle expect the National Indoor Stadium to be filled to its 25,000 capacity (cheap seats £1, VIP ringside £675) to see him fight the previously almost invisible Argentinian Luis Deniso Barrera.

Eubank, 30, whose lingering charisma has attracted a score of package tourists, complains of his British critics: "I had an idea, I created that image - that of the showman - and that's all they focus on." For a fighter who must concede that some of his better performances include those smoke-filled moments before he vaults into the ring, this is a bit rich; and it is debatable whether he will be any richer once the arithmetic is done.

Fighting for the first time in a year against a 33-year-old opponent of monumental ability, Eubank has attracted no live British television and must rely for a financial return on sponsorship and ticket sales. In addition he has surrendered whatever market value is normally attached from the concept of "The Comeback".

This venture has been ridiculed across the board, from Barry McGuigan to Barry Hearn; it will probably cost Eubank a small fortune, as he is also the co-promoter, but it will provide more material for another bizarre episode in a career that has been as much an entertaining odyssey as a sporting undertaking.

Holed up in the penthouse at the Nile Hilton, Eubank has a round-the-clock police guard and is escorted through Cairo's crowded streets in a cavalcade that not so much suggests a royal presence as demands it. In a scenario that

would stretch the combined imaginations of Roald Dahl and Hunter S Thompson, he has reinvented himself as "The Defender", which, for a man with a lip is asking for a lot of faces to be kept straight.

As far as the fight goes Eubank ought not to be detained long in dealing with Senor Barrera, three years older and the loser of his past four engagements. He only started boxing professionally at 27, as a welterweight, and is regarded as such a peripheral figure here that the organisers were not sure in which hotel he would stay.

Ronnie Davies, who has been Eubank's trainer for nine years, says the enigma has a bright future at light-heavyweight and has even talked of a hard meeting in that division with Steve Collins.

It was the Irishman's strength and doggedness at 12st that persuaded a weight-drained Eubank to walk away from boxing in 1995. He returned in 1995 when he beat him for the second time to keep the super-middleweight title that Eubank had defended 19 times over four and a half years.

He had been telling him for four years to move up to light-heavyweight, but he wouldn't listen," Davies said yesterday. "Even at 12st 6lb he has to dry out to make the weight."

But he would love Collins to move up to light-heavy. That would really motivate him." That sensible judgement of course brings into question the viability of not only tonight's bout but many others in Eubank's career. Whatever he says about wanting respect for his many views, from mark-making in the past has shown scant regard for the roughest truth of prize fighting: that a fight should be a physical as much as a financial or theatrical challenge.

By his persistent denial of that reality, Eubank has changed his public in the laundromat of life, he is not so much a lost sock as a sockless.

The Telford middleweight Richie Woodhall will have history on his side against guard Hearn in Maryland tonight in the knowledge that the two previous WBC champions both lost their first defences.

Results

Rugby League

FIRST TEST MATCH (Auckland) New Zealand 27, Great Britain 10

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

Tennis

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

ATP CASH CUP (Ostrava): Andrei Panfilov (Czech) 7-6(5), Petr Prinosil (Czech)

Sport in brief

Baseball

The Atlanta Braves crushed the St Louis Cardinals 15-0 on Thursday, becoming the first team to win the National League series.

Athletics

Melbourne has bid to host the 2006 Commonwealth Games and is expected to be joined by Wellington, Durban and Bridgetown.

Basketball

Alton Byrd, the Crystal Palace coach, is contemplating a comeback at the age of 39.

Baseball

The Atlanta Braves crushed the St Louis Cardinals 15-0 on Thursday, becoming the first team to win the National League series.

Athletics

Melbourne has bid to host the 2006 Commonwealth Games and is expected to be joined by Wellington, Durban and Bridgetown.

Basketball

Alton Byrd, the Crystal Palace coach, is contemplating a comeback at the age of 39.

Squash

England learn from Charman school

England women's world team will face Australia here in today's final of the Perth women's world team championship.

Squash

England learn from Charman school

England women's world team will face Australia here in today's final of the Perth women's world team championship.

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70

WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP (Wentworth): Ernie Els (S.A.) 66, Steve Stricker (USA) 70



Hail to the Chief Wimbledon's striker on life near the top 22



Carry on up the Nile Kevin Mitchell with Eubank in Cairo 23

Gascoigne admits to being a disgrace

Patrick Glenn

PAUL GASCOIGNE yesterday admitted to bringing disgrace upon himself but promised: "I'm going to stand up for myself, come back stronger and do my best for Rangers."

As calls for his sacking by the club over alleged wife-beating and his on-field misbehaviour multiplied the erratic England midfielder decided to conduct his own defence. Reporters who assembled at Ibrox for the weekly pre-match rituals were startled when the manager Walter Smith said Gascoigne "wanted to unburden himself".

Smith had already hinted that Gascoigne would play for Rangers in this afternoon's Premier Division match at home to Aberdeen. "I've had a talk with him and he seems all right about things," he said, "but I'll make a final decision tomorrow morning on whether it is best for him to play."

It was then the turn of Gascoigne, accompanied by the assistant manager Archie Knox, to offer his apologies and regrets. "First of all, about what happened the other night," he said of his dismissal against Ajax in the Champions League match in Amsterdam. "I'm a disgrace to myself and I've let down the manager, the chairman, the players, the staff and the supporters."

"After I was sent off against Borussia Dortmund last year I said it wouldn't happen again." With a nod in the direction of the claims that he battered his wife Sheryl, he added: "I think I took my domestic problem into the Ajax match with me."

"I know there have been stories about me wanting to leave here and others saying I would be sacked. It would be easy to walk away, but I'm not going to do that. "I deeply regret what has happened in the last 48 hours, but I came back stronger from Dortmund and I want to do the same again. Football is my life and I want to stand up rather than walk away. I'm going to face up to everything and do my best for this club."

It was difficult to escape the impression that Gascoigne's recitation was merely a vocal exercise rather than the off-spring of deep-rooted remorse and there will be further trials for the midfielder, starting with today's collision with Aberdeen. This is the fixture in which Gascoigne's part in a series of incidents led to his being disciplined by the Scottish FA last season.

The recording of the events showed that he was guilty of several offences, any one of which would have merited a red card. Yet he was not so much as cautioned and the SFA had to rely on the report from their refereeing supervisor to nail Gascoigne.

He was given the equivalent of an ordering-off, served a one-match suspension and had disciplinary points added to his record. The referee that day, John Rowbottom, was unofficially criticised by the authorities and has since taken charge of relatively minor matches — until now. Guess who is in charge at Ibrox this afternoon.

Rangers need Gascoigne to give a convincing performance as the champions preface the midweek embarrassment in Amsterdam with their first league defeat of the season against Hibernian last Saturday and now have only a two-point lead over Celtic.



WORLD MATCH PLAY

Remote control threatens old board game



David Lacey

THIS week a chilling thought has refused to go away. And it is not the prospect of football's ideal husband, OJ Gascoigne, one day being pursued along the M90 by a slow-moving posse of police cars while his fans yell "Go, go, go, go!" from the bridges.

No, the image that lingers dully in the mind's eye is of Mark McCormack sitting in the front row of the directors' box at Old Trafford as the new owner of Manchester United. Impossible? Maybe, but McCormack's international Management Group is one of the five companies being discussed as likely bidders should United decide to sell.

Not that there is any personal animosity towards Mr McCormack, without whom many a golf ball would never have been quite so successfully plinked nor tennis ball plonked. Doubtless Mr McCormack is imbued with that generosity of spirit which the American legal profession is renowned. It is just that mere mention of IMG in connection with the ownership of England's richest club is a worrying indication of where the game may be heading.

Until recently, business-wise, football was small beer. Its terms begged the headlines and its managers were accorded the importance of cabinet ministers, but even at the highest levels the turn-overs compared poorly to the local Marks and Sparks.

Then came Hillsborough, followed by the Taylor Report and the Premier League. The Premier League began the television market which, by signing Alan Shearer for £15 million, promptly blew up in Ewood Park's face.

No amount of cash will buy continuity, as Blackburn are discovering. That takes good management. It also requires patience from the club owners and patience is not something with which those now moving into the game are traditionally blessed.

reportedly, Granada, Whitebread, United News, and Michael Grade's VCL.

Denials abound and nothing may happen, but with Leeds United — who once had an ex-Lord Mayor as chairman — now owned by City slickers and Nottingham Forest, the last club to be run by a committee rather than a board, looking as if they may go the same way, it is clear that the real money is scenting huge dividends.

So what is wrong with that? Surely, to compete with the best in Europe, the English game needs a Berlusconi or two. Better a McCormack or a Grade in charge of Manchester United than a corrupt juggler of figures, Robert Maxwell, or a romantic juggler of footballs, Michael Knighton.

The danger is that when football ownership acquires the rancorousness of the international corporations a loss of touch, with the fans, with a feeling for the game, is inevitable. It may be apocryphal but the story of one of Leeds's new owners asking Eddie Gray if he once played for the club has gone the rounds.

Yet given the likely impact on the game of digital television and pay-per-view, with clubs effectively becoming their own TV soaps, the days of the traditional boardroom made up of local worthies and not-so-worthies but often sharing a strong sense of community are surely numbered.

LOCAL empire builders like Sir John Hall at Newcastle there will always be, but not in any great number. The Jack Walkers will become even rarer. Increasingly clubs will have to turn to mega-rich consortiums simply to keep up and stay up.

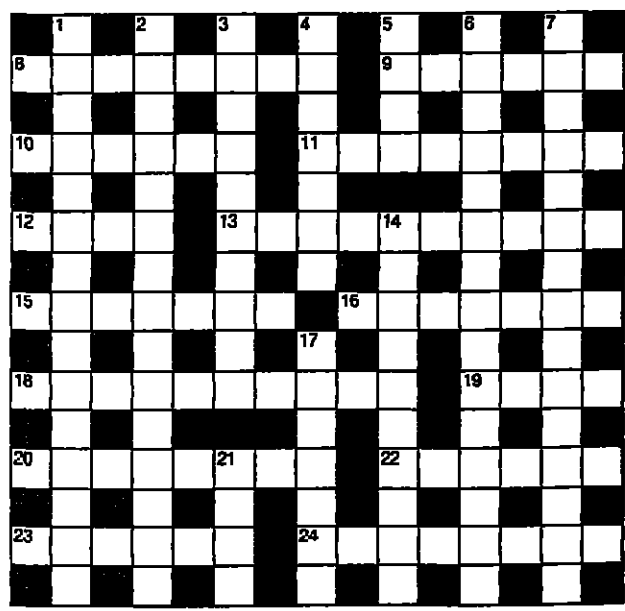
By a supreme irony Hall's Newcastle United are now leading the Premiership while Walker's Blackburn Rovers are struggling at the bottom. Walker's boyhood love of Blackburn persuaded him to pour millions into the club and initiate a transfer market which, by signing Alan Shearer for £15 million, promptly blew up in Ewood Park's face.

Els a-poppin'

Ernie Els refused to throw in the towel yesterday in the Toyota World Match Play championship he has won for the past two years when the Burnham Road course at Wentworth marvelled at one of the great comebacks in golf. Six holes down to the American Steve Strickler at lunch, the South African made a remarkable recovery to win on the final green and secure a semi-final meeting with Mark Brooks, the US PGA champion, who knocked out Colin Montgomerie. Only Gary Player has hit back harder in the event's history: seven down after 19 to Tony Lama in 1965. Player won at the first extra hole. David Davies, page 23

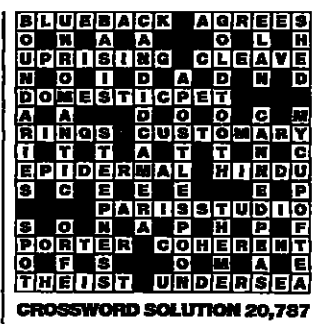
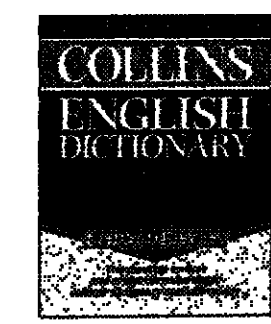
PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

Guardian COLLINS Prize Crossword No 20,788



A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to Guardian Crossword No 20,788, P.O. Box 315, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 2AX, by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday October 28.

Name: Address: Tick here if you do not wish to receive further information from the Guardian Media Group or other companies screened by us



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,787

Set by Araucaria

Across

- 8 Upper class removed from file improperly lent to petty ruler (8)
9 Austrian composer: if I substitute the previous letter, Norman writer (6)
10 Leading fixer (6)
11,12 Poem first goes to hell and only returns in one piece (8,4)
13 Treat a vice differently to get going again (10)
15 An author of 6 in no hurry (7)
16 A musical group on leave (7)
18 Plant (like Chopin?) giving

(after writing) ammunition to small boy (10)

- 19 A lot of current tents (4)
20 African to tear off into Ireland (8)
22 Traveller finds gold, returning with a lot (6)
23 Be next to a Democrat and become a member (6)
24 Supplier of perfume for English duke and Mrs. Turner (4-4)

Down

- 1 After a little cake, Miss Dunstable is Patience or nobody (9-1,5)
2 Never still trying to achieve it mechanically? (8,5)
3 Moving quite fast?

Everyone with a wader on has to (10)

- 4 Turning out unfinished instrument, too good to be true (7)
5 He has a rule: he takes up ancient poetry (4)
6 Single climber to arrive in a whirl after Thursday, which ends with 11 (3,6,6)

7 Forces entertainers playing Timon Jay about before the Queen, a pedlar of thrills (9-5)
14 Banned batsman's a mind to be impressed (5,4)
17 Sound set — give me a bell (7)
21 The eagle of the lough (4)

© Published by Guardian Newspapers Limited at 110 Finsbury Road, London EC2R 3ER, and at 164 Donaghy, Manchester M20 2PR. Printed at West Ferry Presses Ltd, 255 West Ferry Road, London E14 8UC, and at Trafford Park Printers, Longbridge Road, Manchester M17 1SL. The Dundee Group, Admiral-Rosebud-Strasse 1, 6078 New-Hornburg-Zoothenheim, Germany, Nord Edele, 1401 rue du Caïre, BP 69 - 95052 Reubek, Cedex 1, France, for and on behalf of the Guardian and Manchester Evening News PLC, 46/68B, Saturday, October 19, 1996.

can start screaming and shouting. Then some other guru from Bethnal Green can come and sort things out that are wrong."

Supporters were particularly critical when the club's recent announcement of a £12 million profit coincided with some uninspiring performances by Gerry Francis's struggling side.

But while Sugar has made about £10 million available for new players, he refuses to follow the spending spree of clubs such as Newcastle and Middlesbrough. Of these type of chairman, Sugar said: "One side of them knows it's completely wrong, the other side is seduced by the glitz. They are going to have to go through a disap-

Sugar to quit if blueprint flops

Martin Thorpe on the three-year deadline set by the chairman to prove his practical theories can rekindle Spurs' glory days

ALAN SUGAR has promised to quit Tottenham in three years if his policy of prudence over extravagance proves a flop. The club's chairman is under increasing fire from supporters for refusing to join the trend of splashing out on big-name, big-money players, especially foreigners. But Sugar is prepared to keep those fans frustrated.

"My personal target is three years, to win the championship or at least be in Europe and challenging for the title regularly," he said. "I want to demonstrate that this club can reach a great status without irresponsible dealings in the transfer market."

"If I'm wrong, in three years' time the supporters can start screaming and shouting. Then some other guru from Bethnal Green can come and sort things out that are wrong."

pointment like Klinemann to learn." The brilliant German striker left half-way through a two-year contract.

And Sugar has this word for the Spurs supporters, clamouring for big signings: "They are like my kids when they were young: they all want a racing car now. Well, they can't have it. Every sensible fan doesn't spend more than they've got in their own life. Why can't they understand it at Spurs?"

The chairman says that having sorted out Tottenham's finances, his next target is to "have a team that's not been bought in the close season; to build a team that's got depth and strategy and to build it with a selection of players people maybe never heard of; to nurture them, build them up, teach them a strategy. I am not going out to buy a team, a superficial team that is just going to give you a bit of glitz for six weeks."

So, he is imploring fans to get behind the team now. "What about getting behind what we've got. If the manager and chairman say that, then get behind what we've got. Not, 'you're a bunch of wankers and we're just waiting for a new chairman to bring in players before we'll get behind them'. If they're disappointed, tough luck. If my strategy's wrong, then bring in the next person and let him pour £50-70 million of his money in."

But with seven finances having grown dramatically in his time at the club, he asked: "The point is: who is this Mr X in future? Five years ago I was a successful businessman with a share-market valuation of £400 million or whatever it was. Then football was about a fling of £3 or £4 million which isn't the end of the world if you lose it. But now we're talking a completely different ball game as seen in Newcastle with their £45 million investment."

Advertisement for 'one2one' mobile phone service. Text: 'I WANT TO HAVE A ONE 2 ONE. WHERE DO I START?' Well why not ring our freephone information line? It's open 24 hours a day and we'll advise you on which mobile phone and which type of service package is best for you. Simply call us on 0500 500 121. one2one 0500 500 121 the people to have a one2one with.